

LINCOLN

and

MEN of WAR TIMES



Alexander Kelly McClure

With an Introduction by
Earl Schenck Miers

LINCOLN

AND

MEN OF WAR-TIMES

By: A. K. McClure

Much has been written about the most critical moment of all American history, the time of the Civil War. Yet few authors have shown more insight and understanding in portraying Lincoln and his circle than A. K. McClure, his friend and, at times, his confidant. The two men often sat in the dimly lighted White House, seeking a solution to the problem of a divided Union, while the city of Washington slept.

Lincoln, surrounded by friends and enemies alike, is pictured as a man of wisdom and strength, but also as a highly political being, carefully manipulating the strings as he pulled his party together and sought, first, to attain the Presidency and then, later, to keep it.

Those around Lincoln—Stanton, Hamlin, Cameron, Chase, Stevens, and the generals, McClellan, Grant and Sherman—all played vital roles in the Washington drama against the larger canvas of the Civil War.

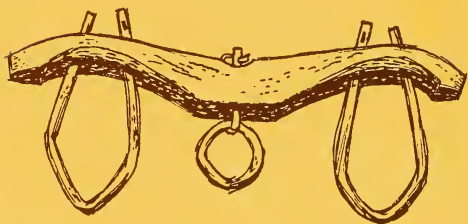
Here are the lustful, greedy, self-seeking politicians and also those dedicated men who fought them—the men who loved Lincoln pitted against those who only sought to use him. Here is turbulence of the capital at war, the quiet midnights when Lincoln paced his study alone except for McClure. These are the men who helped Lincoln write history.

Earl Schenck Miers, in his brilliant introduction, writes:

"Lincoln and Men of War-Times is a 'pattern' book, belonging to that period in our national historical literature when interpretations of the tragic years from 1861 to 1865 were purely personal and sectional; it was a period, whether the

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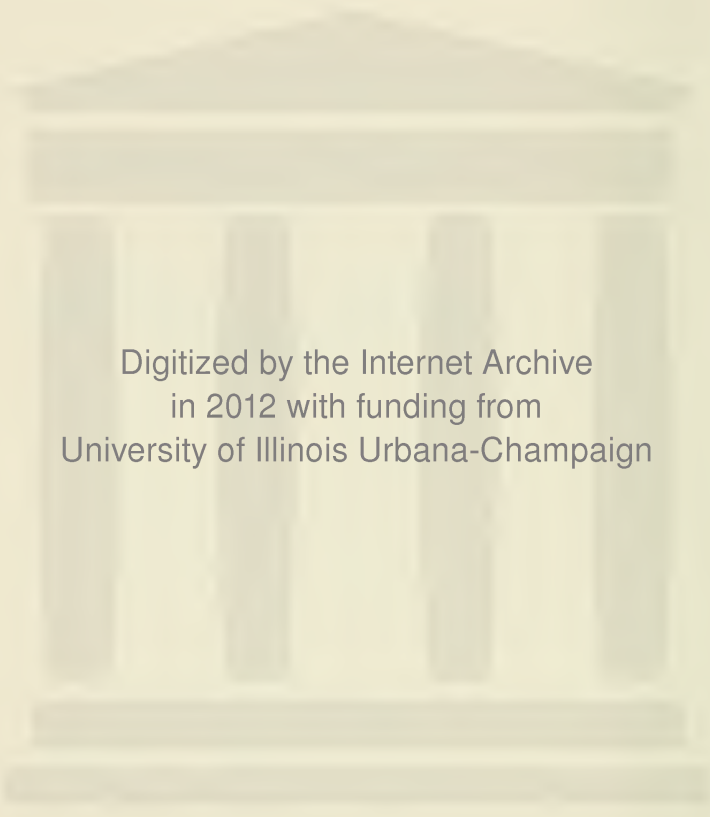


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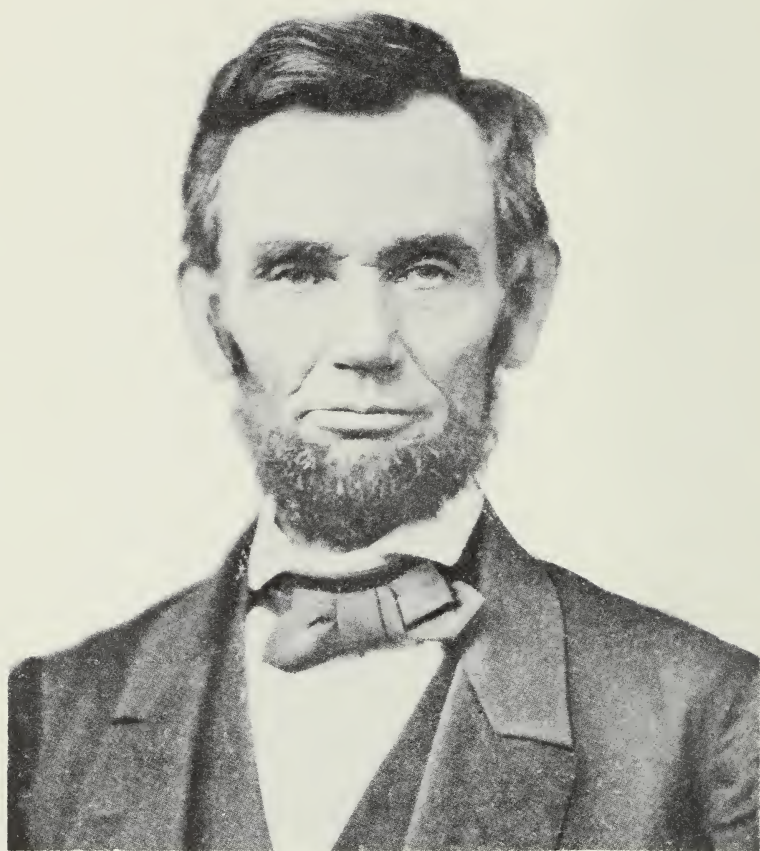
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**LINCOLN AND
MEN OF WAR TIMES**



ABRAHAM LINCOLN, 1864

LINCOLN
AND
MEN OF WAR
TIMES

A. K. McCLURE

Edited by
J. STUART TORREY

With an Introduction by
EARL SCHENCK MIERS



Philadelphia
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INTRODUCTION

I.

ALEXANDER KELLY McCLURE lived to the ripe old age of eighty-one. When on a beautiful June day in 1909 death stilled his stalwart heart, one of the most passionate love affairs in the nation's history ended. The unfailing mistress of the old Colonel's affection through all those years had been his country; its steady growth, the sturdiness of national spirit that had carried it through the trials of Civil War and Reconstruction and set it at last upon the high road to Manifest Destiny, were the marvel of his life. He was an incurable sentimentalist about America, a lover who cherished memories; and he enjoyed recalling what the country had been like when he had been born in Sherman's Valley, in Pennsylvania's Perry County, on January 9, 1828:

"When I first saw the light of day there was not a single steamship on any of the seas of the world; there was not a train of cars drawn by a locomotive; the magnetic telegraph was not even noted in the wildest of dreams; there was not a single State west of the Father of Waters with the exception of Missouri and part of Louisiana; the great Northwest, now [1902] presenting an unbroken galaxy of mighty and prosperous commonwealths, was then an unexplored wilderness, and a large portion of the Western country now possessing a thriving population and clothed with Statehood, appeared on our school atlas as the Great American Desert. The boundless wealth of the Rocky Mountains was unknown, even to the dusky sons of the forest, who peopled that region from prehistoric times, and the now rich slopes of the Pacific, with its

golden gate, had only a straggling semi-barbaric race. Ohio was known as the 'backwoods,' where the sturdy pioneers were yet struggling with the Indians, and ordinary letter postage between the East and the remote regions of the Buckeye State was 37½ cents."

The Scotch-Irish in McClure came out in the fierceness of his pride, his tenacity of purpose. During his early boyhood years, which were divided between his father's farm and the village school, his love affair with America began. Here he learned how a country of 3,000,000 had grown to 12,000,000 and was still bounding ahead. He was caught up, too, in the heady excitement of politics, which was then the national pastime; and he thrived on the political ferment that dominated his lifetime: "I have witnessed the creation of four political parties which have risen to national prominence, two of which have elected Presidents and three of which have elected Governors of Pennsylvania."

At the age of twelve he had his introduction into the world of marvelous delirium that politics could become in the contest between Harrison and Van Buren. He tagged along with the crowd, hurraing for "Tippecanoe and Tyler too" and watching the older men reel down the road from drinking fulsome toasts to the "Hard Cider" candidate. In those times of depression the Whig chant of "\$2 a day and roast beef" had a powerful appeal to the working classes; and young McClure, a Harrison devotee, raced off to the post office for the local papers announcing the result. With delight, he opened the Whig sheet for there was the wonderful news—Pennsylvania had gone for Harrison by a majority of 1,000! Then he opened the Democratic paper and saw the same claim—Van Buren had won the state by 1,000.

If Alexander Kelly McClure trudged home that day baffled by the hocus-pocus of partisan politics, let the record show that truth was on his side—Harrison won the state by 305 votes. Perhaps the greater lesson of the occasion, and one that would be reflected in the lad's own character, was the simple

realization that his father was "one of the few liberal men of that day" willing to read the newspapers of both parties. And although shortly thereafter, at the age of fourteen, young McClure was apprenticed to a tanner, the other bug had bitten; at the first chance he began writing for the *Perry Freeman*, for as he later recalled, "daily newspapers were unknown in the country, and the people had to depend solely upon their local newspapers for their news."

McClure had begun to find his niche now. His old friend, the editor of the *Freeman*, urged him to begin a Whig Journal and in 1846 the *Mifflin Sentinel* appeared with McClure editing the paper, setting up the type and running the ancient press (when it would run) with the help of a single apprentice. Within four years he had sold the *Sentinel* and moved on to Chambersburg where he bought an interest in the *Repository*. Here the future cut of McClure emerged, for as editor he quickly made the *Repository* one of the best known anti-slavery journals in Pennsylvania. He loved his work, yet he would also have his regrets: "I never saw Clay or Webster, although I was six years an editor before their death. A visit to Washington by a village editor was usually beyond the range of his time and means, and of the many who shouted their hosannas to Clay and Webster and Calhoun, only one in many, many thousands ever saw his heroes face to face."

II.

Clearly, for Alexander Kelly McClure, the lure of politics was irresistible; and only eight years from the time when as a tag-a-long boy he had marched down the road shouting for "Tippecanoe and Tyler too" he attended the Philadelphia convention that nominated Taylor and Fillmore. So in 1851, when at last he visited Washington, he pulled strings and had his first audience in the White House. He knew what he was doing: "In those days, in a little village nestling in the spurs of the Alleghenies and guiltless of railroads and telegraphs . . . a personal visit to the President was a most inspiring

theme for discussion, not only in curb-stone and corner store-box gatherings but in social circles as well." The impressions he carried back to Chambersburg of Millard Fillmore were of a "finely chiseled face," a "luxuriant crown of gray hair," and of "a man of magnificent proportions and severe dignity, without a trace of the genial qualities which distinguished some of the later Presidents."

And in time McClure would know them all—most, rather intimately. His own political career began in 1853 when the Whigs of Pennsylvania nominated him for auditor-general. He was then twenty-five, the youngest man ever nominated for a state office—he was a comer. In 1855—the year when he was named superintendent of public printing—he attended the convention in Pittsburgh that organized the Republican Party in Pennsylvania; and in 1856—the year he was a delegate to the convention that nominated Fremont as the first Republican presidential candidate—he sold the *Repository* and was admitted to the bar. His political advancement thereafter was rapid: to the state legislature in 1857-58, to the state senate in '59, and of course in '60 he was off to Chicago for the convention that found in Abraham Lincoln a presidential candidate who could help Andrew G. Curtin carry the governorship of Pennsylvania.

So in two decades Alexander Kelly McClure witnessed the profound change in a country that needed a great deal more than "\$2 a day and roast beef" in order to survive. The difference now was that he was an "insider," who could get into the White House without pulling strings. The awe of the hero seen from afar, if ever seen, was gone; he was face to face now with the men who made national policies and ran a war and muddled from one crisis to the next, and he met them and talked to them with an involvement of temper and temperament which often matched their own. The enduring fascination and validity of his book, *Lincoln and Men of War Times*, arises from this very fact; it is filled with passions and prejudices and half-realized subjective feelings that give to

these pages the dimensions of immediacy and verisimilitude. No man in that age knew all the facts, including McClure; but then, as today, men were willing to die for what they believed was true, and documentation of this type is the very breath and heartbeat of history.

Lincoln and Men of War Times is a "pattern" book, belonging to that period in our national historical literature when interpretations of the tragic years from 1861 to 1865 were purely personal and sectional; it was a period, whether the author was a Pennsylvanian like McClure or a Mississippian like Jefferson Davis, when the underlying theme of the brothers' conflict was moral drama. There was, however, an exception in McClure's case that no Southerner could claim; the Northerner of that age had not—and would never—recover from the emotional shock of the assassin's bullet that had cut down Lincoln. Not by accident is this a book of a world that revolved around the axis of Lincoln, and the reason why was explained in a brilliant lecture by David Potter of Yale:

"He [Lincoln] became the object of fabulous tales as had hardly been told since the days of the monastic chroniclers. . . . In epic terms such as Homer might have used, this legend stressed his great physical strength, coupled with the tenderest compassion of the weak, his brooding wisdom, his infinite patience and humility. . . . Hence emerged a figure born in a log-cabin as lowly as any manger, growing up to bear the sorrows of the race and to suffer for all humanity. At last, on Good Friday, 1865, his life on earth was sacrificed for the redemption of the Union, and on Easter Sunday the people met in churches throughout the land to mourn the Saviour of the States."

Whither came this legend? It had, of course, many sources; and among them is *Lincoln and Men of War Times*. When in *A Shelf of Lincoln Books* (1946), Paul M. Angle selected the books basic to understanding Lincoln and his age, McClure's volume was included. Mr. Angle called it—and properly so—"an uncommonly instructive book," adding: "His

appraisal of Cameron, for example, is much more convincing than the all-black characterization that passes current; his analysis of Lincoln as a politician is unsurpassed . . ." Bias, certainly, McClure possessed; but within this understandable limit he was truly a superb reporter.

III.

Difficult years confronted McClure when the war ended. His home, his personal papers and a fortune estimated at \$75,000 had been lost when McCausland's Confederates raided Chambersburg; and by 1866, according to his obituary in the *New York Herald*, McClure had been "broken in health." He settled in Philadelphia, where he resumed the practice of law and soon was back in politics. In 1873 he was elected to the state senate, and filled with his old fire and zeal ran for mayor of Philadelphia on the Citizen's-Democratic ticket. This was a no-holds-barred campaign, with McClure, as a crusader for reform, slashing out at the gross corruption in the municipality's government. He came within 900 votes of carrying the election.

By far the more important event of that year was McClure's association with Frank McLaughlin in the establishment of the *Philadelphia Times*. As editor, McClure struck hard and constantly at the machine power in party management and at official incompetency and dishonesty in Philadelphia. But it was not alone in this area that the *Times* gained renown; McClure's passionate interest in the Civil War was reflected in a series of articles by leading participants of those years of strife which later published in book form as *Annals of the War*—with an introduction signed by "A. K. M."—remains a classic of its kind. His editorship of the *Times* continued until 1901, when his retirement was the occasion for a dinner in his honor at the Clover Club; and that year he was appointed prothonotary of the Supreme and Superior Courts.

The present volume, *Lincoln and Men of War Times*, had appeared in 1892; now other books of equal charm and in-

sight followed—books that readers of this work will want to seek out for the pleasure of knowing more about that thoroughly lively and influential man of war times whose name was Alexander Kelly McClure. *Old Time Notes of Pennsylvania* and *Col. A. K. McClure's Recollections of Half a Century* are especially delightful; and so, too, is *Our Presidents and How We Make Them*. His fascination for the miracle of the country that had grown up around him never wavered, and thus we find him writing in 1902: "At that time [1861] the entire circulation [of money] was about \$435,000,000, or less than \$14 per capita, as compared with the present circulation of over two billions, giving nearly \$30 of money to every man, woman and child in the land"—which is precisely the kind of statistic you would expect to find absorbing the mind of a man who could list among his published works *The Authentic Life of William McKinley*! Indeed, America had passed far beyond the age of "\$2 a day and roast beef"!

Known widely for his own matchless gifts of oratory, McClure had only one possible regret about his country—"the universal advent of the newspaper" had buried popular oratory under "the mastery of forceful disputation." Yet even this change he accepted philosophically: "Intelligence has become too universal for leadership to make successful battle by rhetorical appeals to prejudice or passion, and therein is the greatest safety to the noblest republic of the world." In this comforting conviction, he spent a pleasant afternoon on June 6, 1909, talking to old friends on his front porch before he retired for the quiet nap that would be his final sleep. But he should have known; America was too vibrant, too restless; nothing was fixed and other changes would come—radio, television. Ah, to a man of the crusading mind, the political fever, the golden voice that Alexander Kelly McClure possessed, what might he not have accomplished in this modern age!

EARL SCHENCK MIERS

EDISON, NEW JERSEY
JULY, 1961

PREFACE

THE CHAPTERS in this volume make no pretensions to give either a biography of Abraham Lincoln or a history of his memorable administration. They were written amidst the constant pressure of editorial duties simply to correct some popular errors as to Lincoln's character and actions. So much has been written of him by persons assuming to possess information obtained in the inner circle of his confidence, and such conflicting presentations of his personal attributes and private and public acts have been given to the public, that I have deemed it a duty to contribute what little I could from personal knowledge, to correct some common errors in estimating his character, ability, and efforts.

The closest men to Abraham Lincoln, both before and after his election to the Presidency, were David Davis, Leonard Swett, Ward H. Lamon, and William H. Herndon. Davis and Swett were his close personal and political counselors; Lamon was his Marshal for Washington and Herndon had been his law-partner for twenty years. These men, who knew Mr. Lincoln better than all others, unite in testifying that his extreme caution prevented him from making a personal confidant of any one; and my own more limited intercourse with him taught me, in the early period of our acquaintance, that those who assumed that they enjoyed Lincoln's confidence had little knowledge of the man. It is the generally honest but mistaken belief of confidential relations with Lincoln on the part of biographers and magazine and newspaper writers that

has presented him to the public in such a confusion of attitudes and as possessing such strangely contradictory individual qualities.

I saw Mr. Lincoln many times during his Presidential term, and, like all of the many others who had intimate relations with him, I enjoyed his confidence only within the limitations of the necessities of the occasion. I do not therefore write these chapters assuming to have been the confidant of Mr. Lincoln; but in some things I did see him as he was, and, from necessity, knew what he did and why he did it. What thus happened to come under my own observation and within my own hearing often related to men or measures of moment then and quite as momentous now, when the events of the war are about to be finally crystallized into history.

My personal knowledge of occurrences in which Mr. Lincoln and other great actors in the bloody drama of our Civil War were directly involved enables me to present some of the chief characteristics of Mr. Lincoln, and to support them by facts and circumstances which are conclusive. I have, therefore, written only of Lincoln and his relations with the prominent chieftains and civilians with whom I had more or less intimate personal acquaintance. The facts herein given relating to leading generals and statesmen are presented to illustrate in the clearest manner possible the dominating characteristics of Mr. Lincoln. They may or may not be accepted by the public as important, but they have the one merit of absolute truthfulness.

Abraham Lincoln achieved more in American statesmanship than any other President, legislator, or diplomat in the history of the Republic; and what he achieved brought no borrowed plumes to his crown. Compelled to meet and solve the most momentous problems of our government, and beset by confused counsels and intensified jealousies, he has written the most lustrous records of American history; and his name and fame must be immortal while liberty shall have worshipers in any land. To aid to a better understanding of

this "noblest Roman of them all" is the purpose of these chapters; and if they shall, in the humblest degree, accomplish that end, I shall be more than content.

The frontispiece portrait of Lincoln is the only perfect copy of his face that I have ever seen in any picture. It was taken in March, 1864, on the occasion when he handed Grant his commission as lieutenant-general. Two negatives were taken by the artist, and only one of them "touched up" and copies printed therefrom at the time. The other negative remained untouched until a few months ago, when it was discovered and copies printed from it without a single change in the lines or features of Lincoln's face. It therefore presents Lincoln true to life. The other portraits of Lincoln present him as he appeared when he delivered his speech in Cooper Institute, New York, in 1860, with the cleanly-shaven face that was always maintained until after his election to the Presidency, and as he appeared when studying with his son "Tad" at his side. These portraits I have selected because they give the most accurate presentations of the man and to them is added a fac-simile of his letter of acceptance in 1860.

I am greatly indebted to the Lives of Lincoln given by Nicolay and Hay—the most complete and accurate record of dates and events, military and civil, relating to Lincoln—by Mr. Herndon, by Mr. Lamon, by Mr. Arnold, and by Mr. Brooks, and to Mr. Blaine's "Twenty Years in Congress," for valuable information on many points referred to in these chapters.

A. K. McCLURE.

PHILADELPHIA, 1892.

CHAPTER ONE

AN EPISODE OF JOHN BROWN'S RAID

FAR down in the beautiful Cumberland Valley, the old-time heartsome village of Chambersburg was one of the chief attractions a generation ago. It was founded by the sturdy Scotch-Irish pioneers, who carried their severe religion and not less severe detestation of despotism with them, and mingled their prayers with their warfare against the savage and the soldiers of King George. The memorable pioneer whose name the village bears chose a lovely spot as his home and the heritage of his children, where the soft murmurs of the crystal waters of Falling Spring are lost in the Conococheague, and the united waters course through the centre of the town on their journey to the sea. Here more than a century had been devoted to the genial civilization that made Chambersburg first in the affections of its people; and its homes, palatial for that day; its grand elms and lindens which arched the walks with their shades; its cultured people, with just pride of ancestry and equal pride of present character and usefulness,—made it one of the most delightful of Pennsylvania towns for citizen or visitor. It had none of the paralysis that comes when “wealth accumulates and men decay;” large fortunes were unknown, but plenty, thrift, and comfort stamped their impress upon the community.

In the summer of 1859 a man of rather rude aspect, but of grave and quiet demeanor, was noticed by the village crowd that usually gathered in social converse about the post-office while the evening mail was being distributed. He attracted

little attention, as he seldom spoke save when spoken to, and then only in the briefest way. He was known as "Dr. Smith," and was reputed to be engaged in the development of iron-mines on the Potomac, some twenty-five miles distant. He lodged at a private boarding-house off from the centre of the town, and there was nothing in his sayings or doings to excite any apprehension that his mission was anything else than a peaceful one. This man was John Brown, then of Kansas fame, and later immortalized in song and story throughout every civilized land. The supposed mining-implements which he was storing in Chambersburg were the rude pikes with which the Negroes of Virginia were to be armed in their expected insurrection against their masters. There was not a man, woman, or child in Chambersburg who then dreamed that "Dr. Smith" was John Brown—not one who knew or suspected his real purpose. None of the many who then saw him casually from day to day could have dreamed that the harmless-looking and acting "Dr. Smith" was engaged in a drama the sequel of which would be enacted when the vandals' torch left the beautiful old village in ashes only five years later. The South ever believed that John Brown made Chambersburg the base for his mad raid on Harper's Ferry because he had many sympathizing confidants and abettors there; and that unjust prejudice resolved all doubts as to dooming the town when McCausland rioted in its destruction on the 30th of July, 1864.

In the early part of October, 1859, two men, unknown to me, entered my office and asked to submit some legal matters in private. We retired to the private office, when the younger of the two, an intelligent and evidently positive man, gave his name as Francis Jackson Meriam of Boston, and his companion gave his name as John Henry. Meriam said that he was going on a journey South; that he had some property at home; that accidents often happened to travelers; and that he desired me to draw his will. I did so, and was not surprised that a young Boston traveler, after making a few special be-

quests, gave his property to the Abolition Society of his native state. There was nothing in his appearance, manner, or conversation to attract any special attention to his proceeding, and his will was duly executed, witnessed, and, in obedience to his orders, mailed to the executor in Boston. When I asked Meriam's companion to witness the will, he declined, saying that he was a traveler also, and that both the witnesses had better be in the same town. His real reasons for declining to witness the will of his friend were—first, that "John Henry" was none other than John Henry Kagi, and, second, because he presumed his life to be as much in peril as was that of his friend. The sequel proved that he judged well, for Kagi was killed in the attack on Harper's Ferry, while Meriam escaped. When the two visitors left they were no more thought of in the village lawyer's office until the startling news came of Brown's attempt to capture Harper's Ferry and to arm the slaves of Virginia in general insurrection. Then, to my surprise, I read the name of the testator in the will I had written a short time before, and the name and description of another assured me that his fellow-visitor in my office was the then fallen John Henry Kagi.

It may be remembered that of the twenty-one who composed John Brown's army of invasion, Watson Brown, Oliver Brown, John Henry Kagi, Adolphus Thompson, and Stewart Taylor, whites, and Sherrard Lewis Leary, Dangerfield Newby, and Jeremiah Anderson, colored, were killed in the battle, and that William H. Leeman and William Thompson were killed in attempting to retreat. Owen Brown, Barclay Coppoch, Charles P. Tidd, and Francis Jackson Meriam, whites, and Osborne P. Anderson, colored, escaped. They made their way through the forests of the South Mountain to Chambersburg, traveling only by night; were concealed in a retired grove near Chambersburg for several days to enable the wounded men of the party to recruit their strength, and then went on by short night-marches across the North Mountain to the Juniata Valley, near Bell's Mills, where they

were taken in charge by a prominent citizen of Harrisburg, whose dust has long mouldered with that of John Brown. Meriam left the party at Chambersburg, took the cars, and went through to Boston without detection. Only two residents of Chambersburg knew of the presence of the fugitives, and they are no longer numbered among the citizens of the town whose history forms such an important chapter in the annals of our terrible civil war. John E. Cook, Edwin Coppoch, Aaron Dwight Stevens, and Albert Hazlitt, whites, and John Copeland and Shields Green, colored, were captured, and, with John Brown their leader, convicted of murder at Charlestown, Virginia, and executed in December, 1859. Hazlitt was the first of the fugitives captured in Pennsylvania. He was arrested while walking along the Cumberland Valley Railroad near Shippensburg, and lodged in the jail at Carlisle. His captors supposed him to be Captain Cook, and that error cost Cook his life on the gibbet. A requisition was quietly obtained from Richmond for the rendition of Cook. When it arrived the identity of Hazlitt had been established, but the requisition remained within thirty miles of Chambersburg, to surprise Cook and return him to Virginia just when he had perfected his plans for escape. Cook was the last of the fugitives to be captured, and the circumstances and manner of his arrest, the strange miscarriage of his apparently certain opportunities of escape, and his heroism in the lawless cause that so blindly misguided him make a truthful story before which the fascinating inventions of romance pale.

I was the counsel of John E. Cook in Chambersburg, and the only person entirely familiar with the inner history of his capture and the plans of escape. The community of which Chambersburg was the centre of business and sentiment was nearly equally divided on the political issues of that day; but the undertow of anti-slavery conviction was stronger than the partisan dogmas which made one-half the people declare slavery a lawful and therefore a defensible institution. Fer-vent and eloquent speeches would be made on the stump in

every campaign against interference with slavery and in favor of the faithful observance of the mandates of the Constitution, and glittering resolves would emanate from party conventions in favor of the Union, the Constitution, and the laws; but the practical division of the community on the issues of obedience to the Constitution and the laws which commanded the rendition of fugitive slaves left here and there a despised Negro-catcher on the one side and all the people on the other side. There was no Democrat in Franklin County to accept a commissionership under the Fugitive Slave Law. I have seen two Democratic president judges administer the laws with a singleness of purpose to hold the scales of justice in even balance; and I have known a prominent Democratic candidate for the same position, once a member of Congress, who publicly demanded justice to the South by the rendition of slaves; but all of them would feed the trembling fugitive, hide him from his pursuers, and bid him Godspeed on his journey toward the North Star. The Democratic president judge who personally remanded Captain Cook to the custody of the Virginia authorities for execution would have assented to and aided his escape had they met simply as man and man outside the sacred obligations of the law. There was no sentiment in Franklin County or elsewhere in the North to give any practical enforcement to the Fugitive Slave Law; and in every contest between slave and master and in every issue relating to slavery the people were profoundly anti-slavery, however they resolved in convention or spoke in the forum or voted at the polls. This statement of the public sentiment that prevailed a quarter of a century ago in Southern Pennsylvania, hard by the slave border, and which was but a reflex of the sentiment of the North that gave practical effect to its teachings, will make the story of Captain Cook's apparently certain but singularly-defeated opportunities of escape better understood.

It had been known for some days after the Brown raid on Harper's Ferry that Captain Cook was at large, and, as a lib-

eral reward for his capture had been offered by Governor Wise of Virginia, and a minute description of his person published throughout the country, the whole skilled and amateur detective force of the land was watching every promising point to effect his capture. The Northern cities, East and West, were on the watch to discover his hiding-place, but the forest-schooled and nature-taught detective of the South Mountain knew that some of its fastnesses must be his retreat. The broken ranges of the mountain on the southern border of Franklin embraced the line between Pennsylvania and Maryland, between the free and the slave States. It was the favorite retreat of the fugitive slave, and its nearness to Harper's Ferry, and its solitude where only the hunter or the chopper wandered, made it the most inviting refuge for the fleeing insurrectionist. Cook was known as a man of desperate courage, as a rare expert in the use of pistol and rifle, as a reckless desperado in the anti-slavery crusade; and his capture alive was not expected. He had braved assassination in Kansas, and all believed that he would resist to the death any attempt to capture him for Virginia vengeance on the gallows. He had been concealed in the mountain-recesses for some days with his companions, who subsequently escaped through Chambersburg to the North, when he decided to seek out some woodman's home and obtain provisions. They were afraid to shoot game, lest the reports of their guns might indicate their retreat and lead to their capture. Cook was of a nervous, restless, reckless disposition, and he started out alone, going he knew not whither, to obtain food. He reasoned plausibly that he could not be captured by any one or two men, as he was well armed and thoroughly skilled in the use of his weapons. He took no thought of arrest, as, had a score of armed men confronted him, he would have sold his life as dearly as possible and died in the battle for his liberty. He understood that he might die any day or hour, but to be made a prisoner and be rendered up to Virginia justice to die on the gibbet he meant to escape. He felt safe, therefore,

in his venture out in the pathless mountains to claim the hospitality of some humble home in the wilderness. And his judgment would have been justified had he not walked into the hands of the only man in Franklin County who combined with the courage and the skill the purpose to capture him.

Among the sturdy population of the mountaineers on the southern Pennsylvania border was a family of Logans. There were two brothers, both shrewd, quiet, resolute men, both strongly Southern in their sympathies, both natural detectives, and both trained in the summary rendition of fugitive slaves without process of law. It was common for slaves to escape from Maryland and Virginia into the South Mountain, whose broken spurs and extended wings of dense forest gave them reasonably safe retreat. Their escape would be followed by handbills describing the fugitives and offering rewards for their capture and return. These offers of rewards always found their way into the hands of Daniel and Hugh Logan, and many fleeing sons of bondage were arrested by them and quietly returned to their masters. Hugh followed his natural bent and went South as soon as the war began. He at once enlisted in the Confederate service, rose to the rank of captain, and was the guide in General Stuart's raid to Chambersburg in October, 1862. He then saved me from identification and capture, although my arrest was specially ordered, with that of a dozen others, in retaliation of Pope's arrest of Virginia citizens; and I was glad at a later period of the war to save him from summary execution as a supposed bushwhacker by General Kelley. Whatever may be said or thought of his convictions and actions, he sealed them with his life, as he fell mortally wounded in one of the last skirmishes of the war. His brother Daniel was less impulsive, and he did not believe that either slavery or freedom was worth dying for. He was then just in early manhood and a man of rare qualities. He possessed the highest measure of courage, but never sought and seldom shared in a quarrel. He was a complete picture of physical strength, compactly and symmetrically formed,

and with a face whose clear-cut features unmistakably indicated his positive qualities. He was a born detective. Silent, cunning, tireless, and resolute, he ever exhausted strategy in his many campaigns against fugitives, and he seldom failed. Had he been city-born, with opportunities for culture in the profession, Logan would have made one of the best chiefs of a detective bureau to be found in the country. But, mountain-born, unschooled save by himself, and trained only in the rude contests with fugitive slaves and an occasional criminal in the border wilderness, he finally wearied of his trade, and his arrest of Captain Cook was his last exploit in the detective line. He subsequently removed to Lancaster, where a very quiet, well-to-do, well behaved, and respected dealer in horses answered to the name of Daniel Logan.

In a mountain-ravine near Mont Alto Furnace, Cleggett Fitzhugh, manager of the works, and a man of Southern birth and strong Southern sympathies, was overseeing a number of men at work, and Daniel Logan had happened to come that way and was engaged in casual conversation with him. The ravine is so hidden by the surrounding forest that one unacquainted with the locality would not know of its existence until he entered it. Captain Cook, in his wanderings in search of food, was surprised to find himself suddenly emerge from the mountain-thicket into an open space and within less than fifty yards of a number of workmen. He was clad and armed as a hunter, and he at once decided to evade suspicion by boldly meeting the men he could not hope to escape by flight. The moment he appeared the keen eye of Logan scanned him, and, without betraying his discovery in any way, he quietly said to Fitzhugh, "That's Captain Cook; we must arrest him; the reward is one thousand dollars." Fitzhugh heartily sympathized with Logan alike in hatred of the John Brown raiders and in desire for the reward, and he knew enough about Logan to say nothing and obey. Cook advanced in a careless manner to Logan and Fitzhugh, and told them that he was hunting on the mountains and wanted to replenish his stock

of bread and bacon. Logan at once disarmed suspicion on the part of Cook by his well-affected hospitality, as he proposed to go at once with Cook to Logan's store—which had no existence, by the way—and supply the hunter's wants. Cook was so completely thrown off guard by the kind professions of Logan and Fitzhugh that he fell in between them without noticing how he was being flanked. His gun rested carelessly on his shoulder, and the hand that could grasp his pistol and fire with unerring aim in the twinkling of an eye was loosely swinging by his side. None but a Daniel Logan could have thus deceived John E. Cook, who had studied men of every grade in many perils; but there was not the trace of excitement or the faintest betrayal of his desperate purpose on the face of Logan. Thus completely disarmed by strategy, the little blue-eyed blonde, the most sympathetic and the fiercest of all John Brown's lieutenants, was instantly made powerless, as two rugged mountaineers, at a signal from Logan, grasped his arms and held him as in a vice. Cook was bewildered for a moment, and when the truth flashed upon him he struggled desperately; but it was one small, starved man against two strong mountaineers, and he soon discovered that resistance was vain.

"Why do you arrest me?" was his inquiry, when he perceived that violence was useless.

"Because you are Captain Cook," was the cool reply of Logan.

Cook neither affirmed nor denied the impeachment, and the speedy search of his person settled the question, as his captain's commission in John Brown's army was found in an inner pocket. Cook was taken to Fitzhugh's house and stripped of his weapons, consisting of gun, revolver, and knife. He was allowed to eat a hasty meal, and was then placed, unbound, in an open buggy with Logan, to be taken to Chambersburg. He was informed that if he attempted to escape he would be shot; and it did not need an extended acquaintance with his captor to assure him that what he

threatened he would certainly perform. He then gave up all hope of escape by either fight or flight. As they were journeying along the eighteen miles Cook found that his captor was less bloodthirsty than mercenary; and the following conversation, subsequently repeated to me by both parties, passed substantially between them:

"You will get a reward of one thousand dollars for me, you say?" queried Cook.

"Yes, a thousand dollars," answered the sententious Logan.

"They will hang me in Virginia, won't they?" was Cook's next inquiry.

"Yes, they will hang you," was the chilling answer.

"Do you want to have me hung?" was Cook's first venture upon the humane side of his captor.

"No," was the prompt but unimpassioned answer of Logan.

"Then you want only the reward?" was Cook's half-hopeful appeal to Logan.

"Yes; that's all," was Logan's reply.

Cook's naturally bright face beamed at once with hope as he enthusiastically entered into various plans for the payment of the sum that would ransom his life. He told Logan how a thousand dollars, or five times that sum, would not be a matter of a moment's consideration to his brother-in-law, Governor Willard of Indiana, or his other brother-in-law, a man of large fortune residing in Brooklyn; but Logan distrusted this story of high dignitaries and large fortunes, and no practical way seemed open to make Cook's credit good enough to assure his discharge. Finally, he inquired of Logan whether there was no one in Chambersburg who would be likely to take an interest in him, and who could act as his counsel and assure Logan of the payment of the reward. Logan named me as a Republican senator just elected, who might agree to act as his counsel. He proposed to take Cook to my office without revealing his identity to any others, and if I assured him of the payment of the reward he would walk away and leave Cook with me. With this truce between

captor and captive they arrived in Chambersburg a little before sunset, put up at a hotel, and Logan sent for me. I had walked out to the southern suburbs of the town that evening after tea to look at some lots, and on my way back had stopped with a circle of men gathered about a small outskirts store. We had just closed one of the most desperate local contests of the state, and only those who know the sunny side of village politics can appreciate how an evening hour or more could thus be pleasantly spent. It was an out-of-the-way place, and among the last that would be thought of in deciding to look for me. Meantime, Logan had me searched for in every place where I was accustomed to stroll in the evening, until, as it grew late, his evident concern attracted attention, and he feared the discovery or suspicion of the identity of his prisoner. When darkness began to gather and all efforts to find me had been unsuccessful, he sent for an officer and started with his prisoner for the office of Justice Reisher, to deliver Cook to the custody of the law. The office of the justice was on the main street, about midway between the hotel and the suburban store where I had tarried, and as I walked leisurely homeward I noticed a crowd about the door of the little temple of justice. As I came up to the door Logan first noticed me from the inside, and hurried out to meet me, exclaiming in a whisper, with a betrayal of excitement that I had never before seen in him, "My God, Colonel McClure! where have you been? I have been hunting you for more than an hour. That's Captain Cook, and I had agreed to bring him to you. Can't you get him yet?"

I was greatly surprised, of course, and equally perplexed at the grave results likely to follow. I quietly pressed my way into the office until the justice noticed me, and he at once addressed Cook, saying, "Here's your counsel now."

Cook beckoned me to his side in the corner, and said, in a tone of visible despair, "I had expected to meet you at your office and escape this misfortune." He added, "I am Cook: there's no use in denying it. What's to be done?"

I turned to the justice, and said, "There is no dispute as to the identity of the prisoner: a hearing is needless. Let him be committed to await the demand for his rendition."

The justice would have been quite content had Cook been able to bounce through a window and escape, but that was not possible, and Cook was committed to prison. Logan repented of his work when he saw that he had surrendered a life for a price, and his last direction to me as we passed out of the office was, "Get Cook away, reward or no reward."

Cook was conducted to the old jail, accompanied by the officer and myself; and I shall never forget the tremulous voice in which the sheriff inquired of me what precautions he should take to secure the prisoner. I was in the doubly unpleasant position of being counsel for a prisoner whose life depended upon his escape from prison, and also counsel for the sheriff, who was more than ready to obey any instructions I might give him to facilitate Cook's escape without legal responsibility for the act. The sheriff was one of a class of simple countrymen who are as rugged in their political convictions and prejudices as in their physical organization. He ill concealed his willingness to let Cook get away if it could be done without official responsibility for the escape; and this he was more than willing to leave me to decide. I told him to take Cook and myself to a cell, leave us together, and admit no others. When the lawless little captive had got comfortably seated in his cell, I had my first opportunity to note his appearance and qualities. His long, silken, blonde hair curled carelessly about his neck; his deep-blue eyes were gentle in expression as a woman's; and his slightly bronzed complexion did not conceal the soft, effeminate skin that would have well befitted the gentler sex. He was small in stature, barely five feet five, and his active life on the Western theatre of war had left him without superfluous flesh. He was nervous and impatient; he spoke in quick, impulsive sentences, but with little directness, save in repeating that he must escape from prison. I reminded him that he could not

walk out of jail, and that his escape that night, under any circumstances, would be specially dangerous to himself and dangerous to the sheriff. My presence with him in the jail until a late hour and my professional relations as counsel of the sheriff forbade any needless haste. We carefully considered every possible method of getting a requisition for him from Richmond; and, assuming that Cook's arrest was telegraphed to Richmond that evening, a requisition by mail or special messenger could not possibly reach Chambersburg the next day or night. It was decided, therefore, that he should not attempt to escape that night, but that the next night he should have the necessary instructions and facilities to regain his liberty. How or by whom he was to be aided need not be told. The two men who took upon themselves the work of ascertaining just where and by what means Cook could best break out of the old jail were never known or suspected as actively aiding the prisoner. One is now dead and the other is largely interested in Southern enterprises. They did their part well, and, had Cook remained in Chambersburg over the next day, he would have been following the North Star before the midnight hour.

I had spent half an hour with Cook when he first entered the prison, and then left him for an hour to confer with my law-partner about the possibility of a legal contest to delay or defeat the requisition in case it should be necessary. I returned to the jail about ten o'clock, and had my last interview with Cook. As he never dreamed of a requisition reaching him before the second day, and as he was entirely confident of his escape the following night, he threw off the cloud of despair that shadowed him in the early part of the evening, and startled me with the eloquence and elegance of his conversation. His familiar discussion of poetry, painting, and everything pertaining to the beautiful would have made any one forget that he was in a chilly prison-cell, and imagine that he was in the library of some romantic lover of literature and the fine arts. I became strangely interested in the culture

that was blended with the mad desperation of the Virginia insurgent. He was evidently a man of much more than common intellectual qualities and thoroughly poetic in taste and temperament, with a jarring mixture of wild, romantic love of the heroic. He told me of his hairbreadth escapes in Kansas, of the price set upon his head; and his whole soul seemed to be absorbed in avenging the Kansas slavery crusades by revolutionary emancipation in the Slave States. When I asked him whether he would not abandon his lawless and hopeless scheme when he escaped, his large, soft eyes flashed with the fire of defiance as he answered, with an emphasis that unstrung every nerve in his body: "No! the battle must be fought to the bitter end; and we must triumph, or God is not just."

It was vain to argue with him the utter madness of attempting such a revolution, and its absolute lawlessness: he rejected all law and logic and believed in his cause. And more: he fully, fanatically, believed in its justice: he believed in it as a duty—as the rule of patriotism that had the sanction of a higher law than that of man. In short, John E. Cook was a wild fanatic on the slavery question, and he regarded any and every means to precipitate emancipation as justified by the end. He did not want to kill or to desolate homes with worse than death by the brutal fury of slave insurrection; but if such appalling evils attended the struggle for the sudden and absolute overthrow of slavery, he was ready to accept the responsibility and believe that he was simply performing his duty. I do not thus present Cook in apology for his crime; I present him as he was—a sincere fanatic, with mingled humanity and atrocity strangely unbalancing each other, and his mad purposes intensified by the barbarities which crimsoned the early history of Kansas.

After half an hour thus spent almost wholly as a listener to the always brilliant and often erratic conversation of the prisoner, I rose to leave him. He bade me good-night with hope beaming in every feature of his attractive face. I engaged to

call again the next afternoon, and left him to meet nevermore. He could have made his escape in thirty minutes that night, but it would have compromised both the sheriff and myself, and the second opportunity for his flight was lost. I reached my home before eleven o'clock, and was surprised to find Mrs. McClure and her devoted companion, Miss Virginia Reilly, awaiting me in the library, dressed to face the storm that had begun to rage without. They stated that they were about to proceed to the jail, ask to see Cook—which they knew would not be refused them by the sheriff—dress him in the extra female apparel they had in a bundle, and one of them walk out with him while the other remained in the cell. It was entirely practicable, and it required more than mere protestation on my part to prevent it. Even when assured that Cook would certainly escape the following night without embarrassment to the sheriff or any one else, the woman's intuition rejected the reason it could not answer, and only when it was peremptorily forbidden as foolish and needless did they reluctantly consent to abandon the last chance Cook could then have to escape. They were both strongly anti-slavery by conviction, and their lives were lustrous in the offices of kindness. Miss Reilly, better known in Philadelphia as the late accomplished wife of Rev. Thomas X. Orr, was the daughter of a Democratic member of Congress, and was positive in her party faith in all save slavery; and both women were of heroic mould. They many times reproached themselves for not acting upon their woman's intuition without waiting to reason with man on the subject. Had they done so, Cook would have been out of prison, fleetly mounted, and the morning sun would have greeted him in the northern mountains. Their mission failed because forbidden when the escape of the prisoner by other means seemed as certain as anything could be in the future, and the ill-fated Cook lost his third chance for liberty.

About noon on the following day the sheriff rushed into my office, wild with excitement and his eyes dimmed by tears,

and exclaimed, "Cook's taken away!" A thunderbolt from a cloudless sky could not have startled me more, but the painful distress of the sheriff left no doubt in my mind that he had stated the truth. He soon calmed down sufficiently to tell me how a requisition for Cook had been lying in Carlisle, only thirty miles distant by railroad, where it had been brought some days before when Hazlitt had been arrested and was believed to be Cook. The error had been corrected when the identity of Hazlitt had been discovered, and another requisition forwarded, on which he had been returned to Virginia; but the Cook requisition remained with the sheriff of Cumberland. When Cook's arrest was announced the requisition was brought on to Chambersburg in the morning train, and the officer, fearing delay by the sheriff sending for his counsel, called on the president judge, who happened to be in the town, and demanded his approval of the regularity of his papers and his command for the prompt rendition of the prisoner. The judge repaired to the prison with the officer, and performed his plain duty under the law by declaring the officer entitled to the custody of Cook. The noon train bore the strangely ill-fated prisoner on his way to Virginia and to death. No man in like peril ever seemed to have had so many entirely practicable opportunities for escape; but all failed, even with the exercise of what would be judged as the soundest discretion for his safety.

His return to the Charlestown jail, his memorable trial, his inevitable conviction, his only cowardly act of submitting to recapture when he had broken out of his cell a few hours before his execution, and his final execution with his captive comrades,—are familiar to all. His trial attracted more attention than that of any of the others, because of the prominent men enlisted in his cause and of the special interest felt in him by the community in and about Harper's Ferry. He had taught school there some years before, had married there, and his return as one of John Brown's raiders to kindle the flame of slave insurrection intensified the bitterness of the people

against him. From the 28th day of October, 1859, when he was lodged in the Charlestown jail, until the last act of the tragedy, when he was executed, Cook attracted the larger share of public interest in Harper's Ferry, much as Brown outstripped him in national or worldwide fame. Governor Willard, the Democratic executive of Indiana, appeared in person on the scene, and made exhaustive efforts to save his wayward but beloved brother-in-law. Daniel W. Voorhees, later United States Senator from Indiana, was then United States District Attorney of his state, and his devotion to his party chief made him excel every previous or later effort of his life in pleading the utterly hopeless cause of the brilliant little Virginia insurgent. It was a grand legal and forensic battle, but there was not an atom of law to aid the defense, and public sentiment was vehement for the atonement.

Viewed in the clearer light and calmer judgment of the experience of more than thirty years, it would have been wiser and better had Virginia treated John Brown and his corporal's guard of madmen as hopeless lunatics by imprisonment for life, as was strongly advised by confidential counsels from some prominent men of the land whose judgment was entitled to respect; but Governor Wise, always a lover of the theatrical, made a dress-parade burlesque of justice, and on the 16th day of December, 1859, amidst the pomp and show of the concentrated power of the Mother of Presidents, John E. Cook paid the penalty of his crime on the gallows. No demand was ever made for the rendition of Cook's companions who had escaped from Harper's Ferry into the South Mountain with him. Some of them lived in Northern Pennsylvania without concealment, but no one thought of arresting them. A few months thereafter the long-threatening clouds of fraternal war broke in fury upon the country; the song of John Brown inspired great armies as they swept through the terrible flame of battle.

CHAPTER TWO

LINCOLN AND BUCHANAN

It is now more than thirty years since James Buchanan retired from the office of President of the United States, but I doubt whether there is any one of our great national characters whose relations to our civil war are so widely and so flagrantly misunderstood. It will surprise many at this day when I say that Abraham Lincoln took up the reins of government just where James Buchanan left them, and continued precisely the same policy toward the South that Buchanan had inaugurated, until the Southern leaders committed the suicidal act of firing upon Fort Sumter. From the time that Buchanan's original Cabinet was disrupted on the sectional issues that culminated in armed rebellion, the administration of Buchanan was not only thoroughly loyal to the preservation of the Union, but it fixed the policy that Lincoln accepted, and from which he took no marked departure until actual war came upon him. This is not the common appreciation of Buchanan among the American people, but it is the truth of history. He retired from his high office in the very flood-tide of sectional and partisan passion. The loyal people were frenzied to madness by what was regarded as the perfidy of Buchanan's war minister, John B. Floyd, in shipping valuable arms and munitions to the South; by the insolent treason of his Secretary of the Treasury, Howell Cobb; by the boldly-asserted and generally-believed treachery of his Secretary of the Navy, Isaac Toucey, in scattering our navy throughout the world; and it is now accepted

by many, amongst even intelligent people of this country, that Buchanan was faithless to his duty in failing to reinforce Major Anderson at Sumter. In addition to these deeply-seated unjust convictions in regard to Buchanan, he is commonly believed to have been in hostility to the Lincoln administration and to the war, and his sympathies to have been with the South in the bloody struggle for the preservation of the Union. It is certainly time that these utterly erroneous and most unjust impressions as to Buchanan should be dissipated; and, fortunately for his own good name, he has left on record the most positive evidence of his devotion to the Union and his earnest support of the government in the most vigorous prosecution of the war that had been, as he always held, wantonly precipitated upon the nation by the South. I never was in political sympathy with Buchanan while he was in public life, excepting the few closing months of his administration, when, as I then knew, both he and his Cabinet were estranged from their ultra-Democratic friends North and South, and were in daily intercourse with the leading friends of Lincoln as the incoming President. My personal acquaintance with him was of the most casual character, and I have therefore neither lingering personal nor political affection to inspire me to any strained attempt to vindicate his memory.

Buchanan as President should be judged by the circumstances under which he reached that position, by his long-cherished and conscientious convictions, and by his peculiar political environment, that led him into the most sympathetic relations with the South. It should be remembered that he was elected President over General Fremont, a distinctly sectional candidate who was not thought of with any degree of favor in any state south of Mason and Dixon's line. It was an earnest battle against what was assailed as the ultra-sectionalism of the North, and it consolidated the South in support of Buchanan. It naturally intensified the sober judgment of his life against political Abolitionism, and he entered the Presidency owing his election to the solid vote of the slave

states. To these facts, which could not fail to profoundly impress Buchanan, it should be added that he was naturally a most conservative and strict-constructionist statesman. Born and reared in the Federal school, acting with the Federal party until he had become noted as a leader in Congress, and gravitating thence into the Democratic school when strict constructionists had settled upon state rights as the jewel of their faith, it is not surprising that Buchanan sympathized with the South in all the preliminary disputes which finally ended in sanguinary war. That he was radically wrong on the fundamental issues relating to the war when he entered the Presidency cannot be doubted. He foreshadowed the Dred Scott decision in his inaugural address, and evidently believed that it was to come as a final solution of the slavery dispute, as it greatly enlarged the constitutional protection of slaveholders; and his support of the lawless and revolutionary Lecompton policy, into which he and his party were dragged by the Southern leaders, engulfed him and his administration in the maëlstrom of secession. Thus was he drifting, step by step, insensibly into the hands of those who, however fair in declaration or promise, were treasonable in purpose, and sought through him to wield the power of the government to aid rather than hinder the disruption of the Republic. It is only just to Buchanan, however, to say that whenever he was brought face to face with the true purposes of the Southern leaders he reversed his own policy, revised his Cabinet, and made his administration quite as aggressive as was wise under the circumstances in asserting the paramount authority of the Union.

The crisis that changed Buchanan's whole policy on the question of Secession was initiated on the 12th of December, 1860, when General Cass resigned his position as Secretary of State because he could not harmonize with Buchanan's views in meeting the question. Cass was greatly enfeebled by age, and Buchanan left a private record on Cass' resignation in which he stated that until that time the only difference

between them that he had knowledge of was on the ground that Buchanan had failed to assert with sufficient clearness that there was no power in Congress or the government to make war upon a state to hinder it in separating from the Union. The retirement of Cass was speedily followed by the enforced resignations of Floyd from the War Department and Cobb from the Treasury. Philip Thomas of Maryland succeeded Cobb; Joseph Holt of Kentucky succeeded Floyd; Attorney-General Jeremiah Black was promoted to Secretary of State; and Edwin M. Stanton made his successor as Attorney-General. Thomas remained in office only a month, when he was succeeded by General Dix, an aggressive loyalist. Stanton, Dix, and Holt were aggressively against every form of treasonable rebellion, and they gave a visibly altered tone to everything about the administration in the preliminary disputes with the leading Secessionists. One of the first acts of South Carolina after her formal withdrawal from the Union was to appoint Commissioners to proceed to Washington to treat with the government of the United States for peaceable separation and the recognition of the independence of the Palmetto State. These Commissioners proceeded to Washington, and were courteously received by Buchanan as citizens of South Carolina, without any recognition of their official capacity, and several misunderstandings arose between them as to what was accepted or agreed upon in relation to the military status in Charleston.

It finally became necessary for Buchanan to give a formal answer to the South Carolina Commissioners as to the attitude of the government and his purposes as its executive. He prepared an answer without consulting any of the members of his Cabinet, in which he said: "I have declined for the present to reinforce these forts (in Charleston harbor), relying upon the honor of South Carolinians that they will not be assaulted while they remain in their present condition, but that Commissioners will be sent by the convention to treat with Congress on the subject." In this paper Buchanan

assumed that he had no power to take any action as President—that the whole dispute was one to be submitted to Congress. He added, however, that “if South Carolina should take any of these forts, she will then become the assailant in a war against the United States.” In the many interesting conversations I had with the late Judge Black on the subject of the difficulties in Buchanan’s Cabinet, I received from his own lips detailed accounts of almost every incident of importance that occurred, and what I state in regard to the answer of Buchanan to the South Carolina Commissioners I give from distinct recollection on his authority. On the 29th of December, soon after Buchanan had written the original draft of his answer to the Commissioners, he submitted it to his Cabinet. It was little criticised at the Cabinet meeting by any of the President’s constitutional advisers, and Black was ominously silent. He was profoundly grieved at the attitude the President had assumed, and his strong personal devotion to Buchanan made his position one of extreme delicacy. He was the one man of the Cabinet whom Buchanan regarded as his close personal and political friend. He did not express his views to any of his Cabinet associates until he had spent an entire night in anxious reflection as to his duty. On the following day he called upon Buchanan and told him frankly that if he sent the answer to the South Carolina Commissioners as originally prepared he (Black) must resign from the Cabinet, because he could not assent to the government being placed in such an attitude. It was seldom that Buchanan ever betrayed emotion, but when Black informed him that they must separate Buchanan was moved even to tears. Few words passed between them, and Buchanan handed Black the original paper with the request to modify it in accordance with his own views, and return it as speedily as possible. Black then wrote the paper that went into history as the answer of Buchanan to the Commissioners. Before he presented it to the President it was carefully considered and revised by Black, Holt, and Stanton, who then were, and thereafter con-

tinued to be, with Dix, the aggressively loyal members of the Buchanan Cabinet; and in their actions they had the hearty sympathy and support of the President.

One of the common accusations against Buchanan is that he failed to reinforce the garrisons in the Southern forts and protect them from capture by the Secessionists. A careful study of the facts, however, shows that Buchanan was utterly without an army to protect these forts. He and General Scott had a somewhat bitter dispute on this point after Buchanan's retirement from office, but Scott's own statement proves that he had no intelligent knowledge of the ability of the government to reinforce the forts, or that he, as commander-in-chief of the army, made an official suggestion to the President that was impossible of execution. On the 29th of October, 1860, Scott addressed Buchanan on the subject of these Southern forts, and he enumerated nine of them that would be exposed to easy capture unless speedily reinforced. On the day after thus addressing the President, Scott pointedly illustrated the absurdity of his recommendation by saying to the President, "There is one regular company at Boston, one here at the Narrows, one at Portsmouth, one at Augusta, Georgia, and one at Baton Rouge." According to Scott's own statement, there were but five companies of the army then within the reach of the government to garrison or reinforce the threatened forts. These five companies did not aggregate four hundred men, and these four hundred men, scattered from Boston to Baton Rouge, were presented by Scott himself as the resources of the government for the protection of nine forts in six Southern states.

Our little army of that day was all needed on our then remote frontiers to protect settlers and emigrants from the savages who ruled in those regions, and it would have required weeks, and in some cases months, to bring them to the East for the protection of the endangered forts. Even when war came and the frontiers had to be stripped of their military protection wherever it was possible, there were but

few regular troops at the battle of Bull Run. Scott and Buchanan both agreed that there was danger of turbulence at the inauguration of Lincoln, and they cordially co-operated with each other to take the most effective measures to preserve peace on that occasion. After gathering all the troops that could be marshaled from every part of the country to serve at the inauguration, they finally got together six hundred and thirty, and they made their arrangements for the inauguration with that small military display because the commander-in-chief of the army could not summon a larger force. It was simply impossible, therefore, for President Buchanan to garrison or reinforce the Southern forts, for the reason that he had not the men with which to do it. There was but one way to save the Southern forts, and that was to garrison them so strongly, with ample provisions and munitions of war, that they would be invulnerable to assault. To have sent inadequate reinforcements to any of these forts in the then inflamed condition of the public mind in the South would have been to wantonly provoke attack upon forces that could not protect themselves. Had Lincoln been President he could not have done more without doing what would have been accepted as an open declaration of war against the South, and Lincoln would no more have committed that folly than did Buchanan. It would have been a wise thing to do if we had had an army of thirty or forty thousand men. Then all the forts could have been garrisoned and reinforced, and they could have had the support necessary in case of threatened assault; but our government was entirely unprepared for defense, and when we were compelled to face the peril of war the army could not be increased without making the North either measurably or wholly responsible for precipitating a civil conflict. The intelligent and dispassionate American citizen, who carefully reads the whole story of the action of Buchanan and his Cabinet in co-operation with Scott, must reach the conclusion that Buchanan was not in any degree

at fault for the failure to garrison or reinforce the forts in the Southern states.

On the important question of Buchanan's support of the government after war had been commenced by the assault on Sumter, he has fortunately left the most positive and multiplied evidence of his patriotic loyalty to the Union. He was singularly reticent during the war, and his silence was misconstrued into a lack of sympathy with the government. After his retirement from the Presidency he was most mercilessly vilified, brutally misrepresented as deliberately disloyal, and he seems to have abandoned the hope of correcting public sentiment and doing himself justice until the flood-tide of passion had run its course. He was, however, in constant communication with his leading friends throughout the country, and to every one of them, from the beginning of the war until its close, he expressed the most patriotic convictions, and uniformly urged the earnest support of the war and its most vigorous prosecution. In September, 1861, he was invited by an intimate friend to deliver a public address on the condition of the country and the attitude of the government. In his answer he said, writing in the frankness of sacred friendship, "Every person who has conference with me knows that I am in favor of sustaining the government in the vigorous prosecution of the war for the restoration of the Union. But occasion may offer when it may be proper for me authoritatively to express this opinion to the public. Until that time shall arrive I desire to avoid any public exhibition." In a private letter to James Buchanan Henry, his nephew, immediately after he had heard of the firing upon Sumter, he said: "The Confederate States have deliberately commenced a civil war, and God knows where it may end. They were repeatedly warned by my administration that an assault on Fort Sumter would be civil war and they would be responsible for the consequences."

On the 19th of April, 1861, soon after the bombardment

of Sumter, he wrote to General Dix, who had then been announced as the president of a great Union meeting soon to be held, at which he advised him to repeat the admonitions the administration had given to South Carolina against precipitating war. He referred to the fact that as Dix had been a member of the Cabinet at the time he could speak with great propriety of the utter want of excuse on the part of South Carolina for firing upon Sumter. In this letter he said: "The present administration had no alternative but to accept the war initiated by South Carolina or the Southern Confederacy. The North will sustain the administration to a man, and it ought to be sustained at all hazards." Again, on the 26th of April, writing to Baker, he said: "The attack on Fort Sumter was an outrageous act. The authorities at Charleston were several times warned by my administration that such an attack would be civil war, and would be treated as such. If it had been made in my time it should have been treated as such." In a letter to Stanton, May 6, when Stanton was writing to Buchanan fiercely criticizing Lincoln and every act of the administration, Buchanan said: "The first gun fired by Beauregard aroused the indignant spirit of the North as nothing else could have done, and made us an unanimous people. I repeatedly warned them that this would be the result." In a letter to King, July 13, he said: "The assault upon Fort Sumter was the commencement of war by the Confederate States, and no alternative was left but to prosecute it with vigor on our part. Up until all social and political relations ceased between the Secession leaders and myself I had often warned them that the North would rise to a man against them if such an assault was made. . . . I am glad that General Scott does not underrate the strength of his enemy, which would be a great fault in a commander. With all my heart and soul I wish him success." In a letter to Leiper, August 31, he said: "I agree with you that nothing but a vigorous prosecution of the war can now determine the ques-

tion between the North and the South. It is vain to think of peace at the present moment."

In a letter to Dr. Blake, September 12, he said: "We must prosecute the war with the utmost vigor. May God grant us a safe deliverance and a restoration of the Union!" In a letter to King, September 18, he said: "I think I can perceive in the public mind a more fixed, resolute, and determined purpose than ever to prosecute the war to a successful termination with all the men and means in our power. Enlistments are now proceeding much more rapidly than a few weeks ago, and I am truly glad of it. The time has passed for offering compromises and terms of peace to the seceded States. . . . There is a time for all things under the sun, but surely this is not the moment for paralyzing the arm of the national administration by a suicidal conflict among ourselves, but for bold, energetic, and united action." On the 28th of September, Buchanan addressed a letter to a committee of the citizens of Chester and Lancaster counties who had invited him to address a Union meeting at Hagersville. He declined because "advancing years in the present state of my health render it impossible." He said: "Were it possible for me to address your meeting, waiving all other topics, I should confine myself to a solemn and earnest appeal to my countrymen, and especially those without families, to volunteer for the war and join the many thousands of brave and patriotic volunteers who are already in the field. This is the moment for action—for prompt, energetic, and united action—and not for discussion of peace propositions." In closing the letter he said that until the South shall voluntarily return to the Union "it will be our duty to support the President with all the men and means at the command of the country in a vigorous and successful prosecution of the war."

In a letter to King, January 28, 1862, he said: "I do most earnestly hope that our army may be able to do something before the first of April. If not, there is great danger not

merely of British, but of European, interference." In a letter to Mrs. Boyd, February 16, he said: "The Confederate States commenced this unhappy war for the destruction of the Union, and until they shall be willing to consent to its restoration there can be no hopes of peace." On the 4th of March he wrote Judge Black: "They (the South) chose to commence civil war, and Mr. Lincoln had no alternative but to defend the country against dismemberment. I certainly should have done the same thing had they begun the war in my time, and this they well knew." In a letter to Dr. Blake, July 12, he speaks of the deep anxiety he felt about the safety of McClellan's army, with a heavy pressure removed from his heart when he learned that it was safe, and he then adds: "Without doubt his change of position in the face of a superior army evinced great skill in strategy; but why was the wrong position originally selected? I still feel great confidence in McClellan, and with all my heart wish him success. Still, there is a mystery in the whole affair which time alone can unravel." On February 14, 1863, in a letter to Roosevelt, he expressed his great disappointment that a country so great as ours "has not yet produced one great general." In a letter to Leiper, March 19, he said: "I cannot entertain the idea of a division of the Union; may God in His good providence restore it!" In a letter to Schell, July 25, he expresses his profound regret at Governor Seymour's hostility to the national conscription law, and said: "The conscription law, though unwise and unjust in many of its provisions, is not in my opinion unconstitutional." So earnest was Buchanan in his efforts to have the democracy of Pennsylvania give the most cordial support to Lincoln and to the war that he even transgressed the lines of delicacy in a letter addressed to Judge Woodward, then a Supreme Justice and candidate for Governor of Pennsylvania, earnestly appealing to him to sustain the national conscription law by a judicial decision. This he did as early as July, 1863, when the question was first raised in our courts. In a letter of September 5, also addressed to

Judge Woodward, he offered an apology for having advised him as to his judicial duties, and his apology was, as stated by himself, "I perceived that in New York the party was fast making the unconstitutionality of the conscription law the leading prominent point in the canvass."

On January 27, 1864, he wrote Capen, expressing his regret that "the Democrats have made no issue on which to fight the Presidential battle," and on the 14th of March he wrote to the same friend, expressing the belief that it would be best if the Democrats would fail to succeed to power at the Presidential election of that year. On the 25th of August he wrote to the same friend, assuming that McClellan would be nominated, in which he said: "A general proposition for peace and an armistice without reference to the restoration of the Union would be, in fact, a recognition of their independence. For this I confess I am far from being prepared." On the 22d of September, writing to his nephew, James Buchanan Henry, he said: "Peace would be a very great blessing, but it would be purchased at too high a price at the expense of the Union." In a letter to Capen of October 5 he declares his purpose to support McClellan for President, and he denounces the Chicago peace platform, and specially commends McClellan for having patriotically dissented from it. In the same letter he expresses some hope of McClellan's election, and frankly says that "the recent victories of Grant, Sherman, and Farragut have helped the Republicans," but he rejoiced at the victories of our armies and the prospect of the South submitting to a restoration of the Union. In a letter to Capen, December 28, he says: "I agree in opinion with General McClellan that it is fortunate both for himself and the Democratic party that he was not elected." In a letter to Flinn, April, 1865, he speaks most feelingly of the assassination of Lincoln, and says: "I deeply mourn his loss from private feelings, and still more deeply for the sake of the country. Heaven, I trust, will not suffer the perpetrators of the deed and their guilty accomplices to escape just punishment, but

we must not despair of the Republic." In a letter to Capen, October 19, 1867, he says: "Negro emancipation is a fixed fact, and so let it remain for ever; but the high privilege of voting can only be constitutionally granted by the legislatures of the respective States." He heartily accepted emancipation, but he felt that the democracy had an issue on which it could stand in a patriotic attitude opposing universal Negro suffrage.

Thus from the day that civil war was precipitated upon the country by the madness of secession until the last insurgent gun was fired there was not an utterance from James Buchanan that did not exhibit the most patriotic devotion to the cause of the Union.

In the flood of light thrown upon the actions of Buchanan and Lincoln as nearly a generation has come and passed away, the intelligent and unbiased reader of the truth of history will be amazed to learn how closely the policy of Lincoln adhered to the policy inaugurated by Buchanan after he had been compelled to face the issue of actual secession and armed rebellion. From the day that Judge Black revised the answer of Buchanan to the South Carolina Commissioners the aims and efforts of Buchanan were uniformly and earnestly in the line of the most patriotic devotion to his responsible duties; and when he had such men as Black, Dix, Stanton, and Holt by his side, the majority, and the absolutely dominant element, of his Cabinet were aggressively loyal to the government, and made heroic effort to exercise every power they possessed to maintain the integrity of the Union. Whatever may have been Buchanan's political errors during the greater part of his administration, and however those errors may have strengthened the arms of secession, it is only simple justice to one of the most conscientious and patriotic of all our Presidents to say that when Buchanan was brought face to face with the fruits of his policy he severed all political and social intercourse with the leaders who had controlled his election, and cast his lot and all the power of the govern-

ment on the side of unqualified loyalty. Not only did the call of Lincoln for troops to prosecute the war after the firing upon Sumter command the uniform and earnest support of Buchanan, but he heartily sustained the government in every war measure, even to the extent of assenting to emancipation. Such a record demands the commendation rather than the censure of our only Pennsylvania President; and I have performed the task of attempting to present him justly to the American people all the more gratefully because there are no lingering bonds of special personal or political sympathy between us. He is entitled to justice from every honest American citizen, and I have sought to give him justice—nothing more, nothing less.

Springfield, Ill., May 23, 1860

Now: George Ashmun.

President of the Republican National Convention.
Sir:

I accept the nomination tendered me by the Convention over which you presided, and of which I am formally apprized in the letter of yourself and others, acting as a Committee of the Convention, for that purpose.

The declaration of principles and sentiments, which accompanies your letter, meets my ~~entire~~ approval; and it shall be my care not to violate, or disregard it, in any part.

Imploring the assistance of Divine Providence, and with due regard to the views and feelings of all who were represented in the Convention; to the rights of all the States, and territories, and people of the nation; to the inviolability of the Constitution, and the perpetual union, harmony, and prosperity of all, I am now happy to co-operate for the practical success of the principles declared by the Convention.

Your obliged friend, and fellow citizen
A. Lincoln

FAC-SIMILE OF LINCOLN'S LETTER OF ACCEPTANCE
OF HIS NOMINATION TO THE PRESIDENCY

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CHAPTER THREE

LINCOLN IN 1860

IT WAS the unexpected that happened in Chicago on that fateful 18th of May, 1860, when Abraham Lincoln was nominated for President of the United States. It was wholly unexpected by the friends of Seward; it was hoped for, but not confidently expected, by the friends of Lincoln. The convention was the ablest assembly of the kind ever called together in this country. It was the first national deliberative body of the Republican party that was to attain such illustrious achievements in the history of free government. The first national convention of that party, held in Philadelphia in 1856, was composed of a loose aggregation of political free-thinkers, embracing many usually denominated as "cranks." The party was without organization or cohesion; its delegates were self-appointed and responsible to no regular constituency. It was the sudden eruption of the intense resentment of the people of the North against the encroachments of slavery in Northern territories, and neither in the character of its leaders nor in the record of its proceedings did it rank as a distinctively deliberative body. It nominated a romantic adventurer for President—a man untried in statesmanship and who had done little to commend him to the considerate judgment of the nation as its Chief Magistrate in a period of uncommon peril. The campaign that followed was one of unusual brilliancy, and resulted in anchoring nearly all of the old Democratic states of the West in the Republican column. In 1860 the principles of the Republican party had

been clearly defined; its organization had been perfected in every Northern state, and each delegate to that convention at Chicago was regularly chosen and represented a great party inspired by a devotion to its faith that has seldom been equaled and never surpassed in all our political history. The halo of romance that encircled General John C. Fremont, "the Pathfinder," four years before had perished, and he was unthought of as a candidate.

For nearly two years before the meeting of the Chicago Convention in 1860 the Republican party had one preeminent leader who was recognized as the coming candidate for President. The one man who had done most to inspire and crystallize the Republican organization was William H. Seward of New York. Certainly, two-thirds of the delegates chosen to the convention preferred him for President, and a decided majority went to Chicago expecting to vote for his nomination. Had the convention been held in any other place than Chicago, it is quite probable that Seward would have been successful; but every circumstance seemed to converge to his defeat when the delegates came face to face in Chicago to solve the problem of a Republican national victory. Of the 231 men who voted for Lincoln on the third and last ballot, not less than 100 of them voted reluctantly against the candidate of their choice. It was a Republican-Seward convention; it was not a Seward-Republican convention. With all its devotion to Seward it yielded to a higher devotion to Republican success, and that led to the nomination of Abraham Lincoln.

I have read scores of magazine and newspaper articles assuming to explain how and why Lincoln was nominated at Chicago in 1860. Few of them approach accuracy, and no one of them that I can recall tells the true story. Lincoln was not seriously thought of for President until but a few weeks before the meeting of the national convention. Blaine has truly said that the State Convention of Illinois, held but a short time before the meeting of the national convention,

was surprised at its own spontaneous and enthusiastic nomination of Lincoln. He had been canvassed at home and in other states as a more than possible candidate for Vice-President. I well remember Lincoln mentioning the fact that his own delegation from Illinois was not unitedly in earnest for his nomination, but when the time came for casting their votes the enthusiasm for Lincoln in Chicago, both inside and outside the convention, was such that they could do no less than give him the united vote of the state. Leonard Swett, who was one of the most potent of the Lincoln leaders in that struggle, in a letter written to Drummond on the 27th of May, 1860, in which he gives a detailed account of the battle made for Lincoln, states that 8 of the 22 delegates from Illinois "would gladly have gone for Seward." Thus, not only in many of the other states did Lincoln receive reluctant votes in that convention, but even his own state furnished a full share of votes which would have been gladly given to Seward had he been deemed available.

The first breach made in the then apparently invincible columns of Seward was made by Horace Greeley. His newspaper, the *Tribune*, was then vastly the most influential public journal on the continent, and equaled in the world only by the *Times* of London. His battle against Seward was waged with tireless energy and consummate skill. It was not then known that he had separated from immediate political association with Seward and Weed. Had his relations with those gentlemen been fully understood then, as they were soon after the convention, when Greeley's memorable letter of political dissolution was given to the public, it would have greatly impaired his influence in opposing Seward. But I think it just to Greeley to say that, independent of all real or imaginary wrongs from Seward and Weed, he was honestly convinced that Seward was not an available candidate in 1860. He espoused the cause of Edward Bates of Missouri, who was a man of most distinguished character and ability, and whose record appealed very strongly to the more con-

servative elements of the party. Indeed, the nomination of Bates would have been within the lines of possibility, instead of the nomination of Lincoln, had the convention been surrounded by local influences in his favor as potent as were the local influences for the successful candidate. The Pennsylvania delegation in determining its final choice gave Lincoln barely four majority over Bates, and but for the fact that Indiana had decided to give unanimous support to Lincoln at an early stage of the contest, Bates would have been a much more formidable candidate than he now appears to have been by the records of the convention.

The defeat of Seward and the nomination of Lincoln were brought about by two men—Andrew G. Curtin of Pennsylvania, and Henry S. Lane of Indiana, and neither accident nor intrigue was a material factor in the struggle. They not only defeated Seward in a Seward convention, but they decided the contest in favor of Lincoln against Bates, his only real competitor after Seward. Curtin had been nominated for governor in Pennsylvania and Lane had been nominated for governor in Indiana. The states in which their battles were to be fought were the pivotal states of the national contest. It was an accepted necessity that both Pennsylvania and Indiana should elect Republican governors in October to secure the election of the Republican candidate for President in November. Curtin and Lane were naturally the most interested of all the great host that attended the Chicago Convention in 1860. Neither of their states was Republican. In Pennsylvania the name of Republican could not be adopted by the party that had chosen Curtin for governor. The call for the convention summoned the opposition to the Democratic party to attend the People's State Convention, and all shades of antagonism to the administration then in power were invited to cordial and equal participation in the deliberations of that body. The Republicans had made a distinct battle for governor three years before, with David Wilmot

as their candidate, against Isaac Hazelhurst, the American candidate, and William F. Packer, the Democratic candidate. The result was the election of Packer by a majority over the combined votes of both the opposing nominees. The American organization was maintained in Philadelphia and in many of the counties of the state. Fillmore had received a large majority of the votes cast for the Fremont-Fillmore Fusion Electoral ticket in 1856 in various sections. These elements had been combined in what was then called the People's party in Pennsylvania in the state elections of 1858 and 1859, and the Democrats had been defeated by the combination, but the American element remained very powerful and quite intense in many localities. Without its aid the success of Curtin was simply impossible. A like condition of things existed in Indiana. The American element had polled over 22,000 votes for Fillmore in 1856, and in 1858, when the same effort was made in Indiana to unite all shades of opposition to the democracy, the combination was defeated by a small majority. While the antislavery sentiment asserted itself by the election of a majority of Republicans to Congress in 1858, the entire Democratic state ticket was successful by majorities varying from 1534 to 2896. It was evident, therefore, that in both Pennsylvania and Indiana there would be a desperate battle for the control of the October election, and it was well known by all that if the Republicans failed to elect either Curtin or Lane the Presidential battle would be irretrievably lost.

Both of the candidates presented in these two pivotal states were men of peculiar fitness for the arduous task they had assumed. Both were admittedly the strongest men that could have been nominated by the opposition to the democracy, and both were experienced and consummate politicians. Their general knowledge of politics and of the bearing of all political questions likely to be felt in the contest made them not only wise counselors, but all appreciated the fact that

they were of all men the most certain to advise solely with reference to success. Neither of them cared whether Seward, Lincoln, Bates, or any of the other men named for President should be nominated, if the man chosen was certain to be the most available. They were looking solely to their own success in October, and their success meant the success of the Republican party in the nation. With Lane was John D. Defrees, chairman of his state committee, who had been called to that position because he was regarded as best fitted to lead in the desperate contest before him. I was with Curtin and interested as he was only in his individual success, as he had summoned me to take charge of his October battle in Pennsylvania. The one thing that Curtin, Lane, and their respective lieutenants agreed upon was that the nomination of Seward meant hopeless defeat in their respective states. Lane and Defrees were positive in the assertion that the nomination of Seward would lose the governorship in Indiana. Curtin and I were equally positive in declaring that the nomination of Seward would defeat Curtin in Pennsylvania.

There was no personal hostility to Seward in the efforts made by Curtin and Lane to defeat him. They had no reason whatever to hinder his nomination, excepting the settled conviction that the nomination of Seward meant their own inevitable defeat. It is not true, as has been assumed by many, that the objection to Seward was because of his radical or advanced position in Republican faith. It was not Seward's "irrepressible conflict" or his "higher-law" declarations which made Curtin and Lane oppose him as the Republican candidate. On the contrary, both of them were thoroughly anti-slavery men, and they finally accepted Lincoln with the full knowledge that he was even in advance of Seward in forecasting the "irrepressible conflict." Lincoln announced in his memorable Springfield speech, delivered on the 17th of June, 1858, "'A house divided against itself cannot stand;' I believe this Government cannot endure permanently half slave and half free," and Seward's "irrepressible-conflict" speech

was not delivered until the 25th of October.* Lincoln was not only fully abreast with Seward, but in advance of him in forecasting the great battle against slavery. The single reason that compelled Curtin and Lane to make aggressive resistance to the nomination of Seward was his attitude on the school question, that was very offensive to the many thousands of voters in their respective states, who either adhered to the American organization or cherished its strong prejudices against any division of the school fund. It was Seward's record on that single question when governor of New York that made him an impossible candidate for President in 1860, unless he was to be nominated simply to be defeated. Had he been nominated, the American element in Pennsylvania and Indiana would not only have maintained its organization, but it would have largely increased its strength on the direct issue of hostility to Seward. It was not an unreasonable apprehension, therefore, that inspired Curtin and Lane to protest with all earnestness against the nomination of Seward. There could be no question as to the sincerity of the Republican candidates for governor in the two pivotal states when they declared that a particular nomination would doom them to defeat, and it was Andrew G. Curtin and Henry S. Lane whose earnest admonitions to the delegates at Chicago compelled a Seward convention to halt in its purpose and set him aside, with all his pre-eminent qualifications and with all the enthusiastic devotion of his party to him.

It was Curtin and Lane also who decided that Lincoln should be the candidate after Seward had been practically

* It is an irrepressible conflict between opposing and enduring forces, and it means that the United States must and will, sooner or later, become either entirely a slaveholding nation or entirely a free-labor nation.—*Seward's speech at Rochester*, October 25, 1858.

But there is a higher law than the Constitution which regulates our authority over the domain and devotes it to the same noble purposes. The territory is a part, no inconsiderable part, of the common heritage of mankind bestowed upon them by the Creator of the universe. We are His stewards, and must so discharge our trust as to secure, in the highest obtainable degree, their happiness.—*Seward's Senate speech*, March 11, 1850.

overthrown. When it became known that Seward's nomination would defeat the party in Pennsylvania and Indiana, the natural inquiry was, Who can best aid these candidates for governor in their state contests? Indiana decided in favor of Lincoln at an early stage of the struggle, and her action had much to do in deciding Pennsylvania's support of Lincoln. The Pennsylvania delegation had much less knowledge of Lincoln than the men from Indiana, and there were very few original supporters of Lincoln among them. Wilmot was for Lincoln from the start; Stevens was for Judge John McLean; Reeder was for Simon Cameron. The delegation was not a harmonious one, because of the hostility of a considerable number of the delegates to Cameron for President, and it was not until the first day that the convention met that Pennsylvania got into anything like a potential attitude. At a meeting of the delegation it was proposed that the first, second, and third choice of the delegates for President should be formally declared. It is needless to say that this proposition did not come from the earnest supporters of Cameron, but it was coupled with the suggestion that Cameron should be unanimously declared the first choice of the state; which was done. Stevens was stubbornly for McLean, and had a considerable following. He asked that McLean be declared the second choice of the state, and, as McLean was then known to be practically out of the fight, he was given substantially a unanimous vote as the second choice. The third choice to be expressed by the delegation brought the state down to practical business, as it was well known that both the first and second choice were mere perfunctory declarations. The battle came then between Bates and Lincoln, and but for the facts that Indiana had previously declared for Lincoln, and that Curtin and Lane were acting in concert, there is little reason to doubt that Bates would have been preferred. Much feeling was exhibited in deciding the third choice of the state, and Lincoln finally won over Bates by four majority. When it became known that Pennsylvania had indicated Lincoln

as her third choice, it gave a wonderful impetus to the Lincoln cause. Cameron and McLean were not seriously considered, and what was nominally the third choice of the state was accepted as really the first choice among possible candidates. The slogan of the Lincoln workers was soon heard on every side, "Pennsylvania's for Lincoln," and from the time that Pennsylvania ranged herself along with Indiana in support of Lincoln not only was Seward's defeat inevitable, but the nomination of Lincoln was practically assured. Thus did two men—Curtin and Lane—not only determine Seward's defeat, but they practically determined the nomination of Lincoln.

Notwithstanding the substantial advantages gained by the supporters of Lincoln in the preliminary struggles at Chicago, the fight for Seward was maintained with desperate resolve until the final ballot was taken. It was indeed a battle of giants. Thurlow Weed was the Seward leader, and he was simply incomparable as a master in handling a convention. With him were such able lieutenants as Governor Morgan, and Raymond of the *New York Times*, with Evarts as chairman of the delegation, whose speech nominating Seward was the most impressive utterance of his life. The Bates men were led by Frank Blair, the only Republican Congressman from a slave state, who was nothing if not heroic, aided by his brother Montgomery, who was a politician of uncommon cunning. With them was Horace Greeley, who was chairman of the delegation from the then almost inaccessible state of Oregon. It was Lincoln's friends, however, who were the "hustlers" of that battle. They had men for sober counsel like David Davis; men of supreme sagacity like Leonard Swett; men of tireless effort like Norman B. Judd; and they had what was more important than all—a seething multitude wild with enthusiasm for Abraham Lincoln. For once Thurlow Weed was outgeneraled just at a critical stage of the battle. On the morning of the third day, when the final struggle was to be made, the friends of Seward got up an imposing demonstration on the streets of Chicago. They had bands and banners,

immense numbers, and generous enthusiasm; but while the Seward men were thus making a public display of their earnestness and strength, Swett and Judd filled the immense galleries of the wigwam, in which the convention was held, with men who were ready to shout to the echo for Lincoln whenever opportunity offered. The result was that when the Seward men filed into the convention there were seats for the delegates, but few for any others, and the convention was encircled by an immense throng that made the wigwam tremble with its cheers for the "rail-splitter."

Twelve names had been put in nomination for President, but the first ballot developed to the comprehension of all that the struggle was between Seward and Lincoln. Seward had received $173\frac{1}{2}$ votes and Lincoln 102. The other votes scattered between ten candidates, the highest of whom (Cameron) received $50\frac{1}{2}$, all of which were from Pennsylvania with the exception of 3. Cameron's name was at once withdrawn, and on the second ballot Seward rose to $184\frac{1}{2}$, with Lincoln closely following at 181, but both lacking the 233 votes necessary to a choice. The third ballot was taken amid breathless excitement, with Lincoln steadily gaining and Seward now and then losing, and when the ballot ended Lincoln had $231\frac{1}{2}$ to 180 for Seward. Lincoln lacked but $21\frac{1}{2}$ votes of a majority. His nomination was now inevitable, and before the result was announced there was a general scramble to change from the candidates on the scattering list to Lincoln. Carter of Ohio was the first to obtain recognition, and he changed four Ohio votes from Chase to Lincoln, which settled the nomination. Maine followed, changing ten votes from Seward to Lincoln. Andrew of Massachusetts and Gratz Brown of Missouri next came with changes to the Lincoln column, and they continued until Lincoln's vote was swelled to 354.

As soon as Ohio gave the necessary number of votes to Lincoln to nominate him a huge charcoal portrait of the candidate was suddenly displayed from the gallery of the wig-

wam, and the whole convention, with the exception of the New York delegation, was whirled to its feet by the enthusiasm that followed. It was many minutes before the convention could be sufficiently calmed to proceed with business. The New York delegates had kept their seats in sullen silence during all this eruption of enthusiasm for Lincoln, and it was long even after quiet had been restored that Evarts' tall form was recognized to move that the nomination be declared unanimous. He was promptly seconded by Andrew of Massachusetts, who was also an ardent supporter of Seward, and the motion was adopted with a wild hurrah that came spontaneously from every part of the convention excepting the several lines of seats occupied by the seventy delegates from New York. Evarts' motion for a recess was unanimously carried, and the convention and its vast audience of spectators hurried out to make the streets ring with shouts for the Illinois candidate for President.

Until after the nomination of Lincoln little attention had been given to the contest for Vice-President. Had Seward been nominated, Lincoln would have been unanimously tendered the second place on the ticket, but with Lincoln nominated for the first place the leading friends of Lincoln at once suggested to the friends of Seward that they should name the candidate for the Vice-Presidency. Greeley was sent to Governor Morgan to proffer the nomination to him if he would accept it, or in case of his refusal to ask him to name some man who would be acceptable to the friends of Seward. Governor Morgan not only declined to accept it himself, but he declined to suggest any one of Seward's friends for the place. Not only Governor Morgan, but Evarts and Weed, all refused to be consulted on the subject of the Vice-Presidency, and they did it in a temper that indicated contempt for the action of the convention. Hannibal Hamlin was nominated, not because Seward desired it, for New York gave him a bare majority on the first ballot, but because he was then the most prominent of the Democratic-Republicans

in the East. The contest was really between Hamlin and Cassius M. Clay. Clay was supported chiefly because he was a resident of a Southern state and to relieve the party from the charge of presenting a sectional ticket; but as there were no Southern electoral votes to be fought for, Hamlin was wisely preferred, and he was nominated on the second ballot by a vote of 367 to 86 for Clay. Notwithstanding Governor Morgan's keen disappointment at the defeat of Seward, he was easily prevailed upon to remain at the head of the National Committee, thus charging him with the management of the national campaign.

I called on Thurlow Weed at his headquarters during the evening after the nominations had been made, expecting that, with all his disappointment, he would be ready to co-operate for the success of the ticket. I found him sullen, and offensive in both manner and expression. He refused even to talk about the contest, and intimated very broadly that Pennsylvania, having defeated Seward, could now elect Curtin and Lincoln. Governor Curtin also visited Weed before he left Chicago, but received no word of encouragement from the disappointed Seward leader.* Weed had been defeated in his greatest effort, and the one great dream of his life had perished. He never forgave Governor Curtin until the day of his death, nor did Seward maintain any more than severely civil relations with Curtin during the whole time that he was at the head of the State Department. I called on Seward but once after the organization of the Lincoln Cabinet, and not for the purpose of soliciting any favors from him, but he was so frigid that I never ventured to trespass upon him again. Three months after the Chicago convention, when the battle

* "I called on Morgan the night after the nomination was made. He treated me civilly, but with marked coolness, and I then called on Weed, who was very rude indeed. He said to me, 'You have defeated the man who of all others was most revered by the people and wanted as President. You and Lane want to be elected, and to elect Lincoln you must elect yourselves.' That was all, and I left him."—*Governor Curtin's Letter to the Author*, August 18, 1891.

in Pennsylvania was raging with desperation on both sides, I twice wrote to Weed giving the condition of affairs in the State and urging the co-operation of himself and Chairman Morgan to assure the success of the ticket in October. He made no response to either letter, and it so happened that we never met thereafter during his life.

The contest in Pennsylvania was really the decisive battle of the national campaign. A party had to be created out of inharmonious elements, and the commercial and financial interests of the state were almost solidly against us. I cannot recall five commercial houses of prominence in the city of Philadelphia where I could have gone to solicit a subscription to the Lincoln campaign with reasonable expectation that it would not be resented, and of all our prominent financial men I recall only Anthony J. Drexel who actively sympathized with the Republican cause. Money would have been useless for any but legitimate purposes, but the organization of a great state to crystallize incongruous elements was an immense task and involved great labor and expense. I visited Chairman Morgan in New York, presented the situation to him, but he was listless and indifferent, and not one dollar of money was contributed from New York State to aid the Curtin contest in Pennsylvania. The entire contributions for the state committee for that great battle aggregated only \$12,000, of which \$2000 were a contribution for rent of headquarters and \$3000 were expended in printing. Three weeks before the election, when I felt reasonably confident of the success of the state ticket, I again visited Governor Morgan, and met with him Moses Taylor and one or two others, and they were finally so much impressed with the importance of carrying a Republican Congress that they agreed to raise \$4300 and send it direct to some six or seven debatable Congressional districts I indicated. Beyond this aid rendered to Pennsylvania from New York the friends of Seward took no part whatever in the great October battle that made Abraham Lincoln President. Curtin was elected by a majority

of 32,164, and Lane was elected in Indiana by 9757. With Curtin the Republicans carried 19 of the 25 Congressmen, and with Lane the Republicans of Indiana carried 7 of the 11 Congressmen of that state. Thus was the election of a Republican President substantially accomplished in October by the success of the two men who had defeated William H. Seward and nominated Abraham Lincoln at Chicago.

CHAPTER FOUR

A VISIT TO LINCOLN

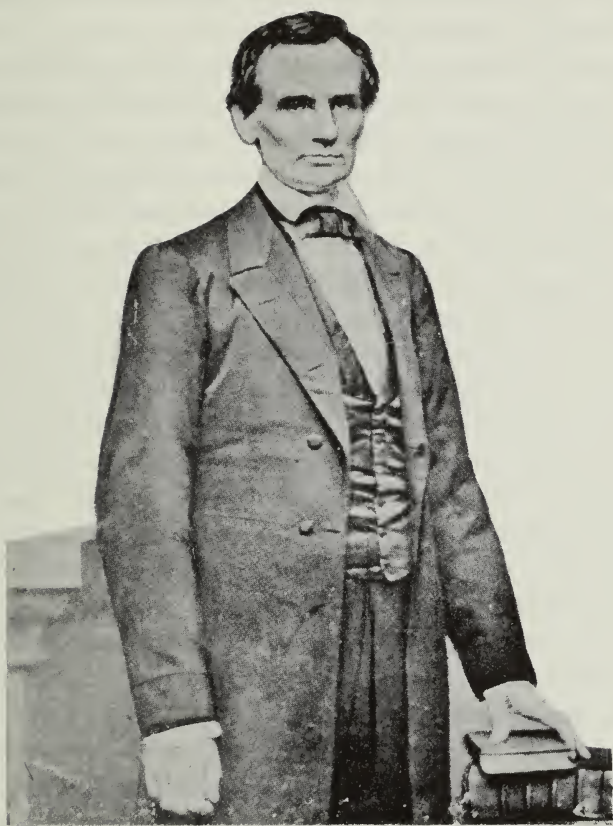
I NEVER met Abraham Lincoln until early in January, 1861, some two months after his election to the Presidency. I had been brought into very close and confidential relations with him by correspondence during the Pennsylvania campaign of 1860. His letters were frequent, and always eminently practical, on the then supreme question of electing the Republican state ticket in October. It was believed on all sides that unless Pennsylvania could be carried in October, Lincoln's defeat would be certain in November. Pennsylvania was thus accepted as the key to Republican success, and Lincoln naturally watched the struggle with intense interest. In accordance with his repeated solicitations, he was advised from the headquarters of the state committee, of which I was chairman, of all the varied phases of the struggle. It soon became evident from his inquiries and versatile suggestions that he took nothing for granted. He had to win the preliminary battle in October, and he left nothing undone within his power to ascertain the exact situation and to understand every peril involved in it.

The Republican party in Pennsylvania, although then but freshly organized, had many different elements and bitter factional feuds within its own household, and all who actively participated in party efforts were more or less involved in them. I did not entirely escape the bitterness that was displayed in many quarters. Had I been simply a private in the ranks, it would have been of little consequence to Lincoln

whether I was competent to conduct so important a campaign or not; but when he was advised, not only from within the state, but from friends outside the state as well, that the party organization in Pennsylvania was not equal to the pressing necessities of the occasion, he adopted his own characteristic methods to satisfy himself on the subject.

I had met David Davis and Leonard Swett for the first time at the Chicago Convention, and of course we knew little of each other personally. Some time toward mid-summer, when the campaign in Pennsylvania was well under way, Davis and Swett entered my headquarters together and handed me a letter from Lincoln, in which he said that these gentlemen were greatly interested in his election—that they were on East looking into the contest generally, and he would be pleased if I would furnish them every facility to ascertain the condition of affairs in the state. I was very glad to do so, and they spent two days at my headquarters, where every information was given them and the methods and progress of the organization opened to them without reserve. They saw that for the first time in the history of Pennsylvania politics the new party had been organized by the state committee in every election district of the state, and that everything that could be done had been done to put the party in condition for a successful battle.

After Davis and Swett had finished their work and notified me of their purpose to leave during the night, they invited me to a private dinner at which none were present but ourselves. During the course of the dinner Swett informed me that they were very happy now to be able to tell me the real purpose of their mission—that had their information been less satisfactory they would have returned without advising me of it. He said that they had been instructed by Lincoln to come to Pennsylvania and make personal examination into the condition of affairs, especially as to the efficiency of the party organization of the state, and that his reason for doing so was that he had been admonished that the direction of the



ABRAHAM LINCOLN, 1860

[Photo by Brady, Washington]

campaign by the state committee was incompetent and likely to result in disaster. They added that, inasmuch as their answer to Lincoln must be that the organization was the best that they had ever known in any state, they felt entirely at liberty to disclose to me why they had come and what the result of their inquiry was.

After their return to Illinois letters from Lincoln were not less frequent, and they were entirely confident in tone and exhibited the utmost faith in the direction of the great Pennsylvania battle. I twice sent him during the campaign—once about the middle of August, and again in the latter part of September—a carefully-prepared estimate of the vote for governor by counties that had been made up by a methodical and reasonably accurate canvass of each election district of the state. The first gave Governor Curtin a majority of 12,000, leaving out of the estimate a considerable doubtful vote. The last estimate gave Curtin a majority of 17,000, also omitting the doubtful contingent. The result not only justified the estimates which had been sent to him in the aggregate majority, but it justified the detailed estimates of the vote of nearly or quite every county in the state.

Curtin's majority was nearly double the last estimate given him because of the drift of the doubtful vote to our side, and, being successful in what was regarded as the decisive battle of the campaign, Lincoln accorded me more credit than I merited. From that time until the day of his death I was one of those he called into counsel in every important political emergency. Much as I grieved over the loss of the many, to me, precious things which I had gathered about my home in Chambersburg, and serious as was the destruction of all my property when the vandals of McCausland burned the town in 1864, I have always felt that the greatest loss I sustained was in the destruction of my entire correspondence with Abraham Lincoln.

About the 1st of January, 1861, I received a telegram from Lincoln requesting me to come to Springfield. It is proper

to say that this invitation was in answer to a telegram from me advising him against the appointment of General Cameron as Secretary of War. The factional feuds and bitter antagonisms of that day have long since perished, and I do not propose in any way to revive them. On the 31st of December, Lincoln had delivered to Cameron at Springfield a letter notifying him that he would be nominated for a Cabinet position. This fact became known immediately upon Cameron's return, and inspired very vigorous opposition to his appointment, in which Governor Curtin, Thaddeus Stevens, David Wilmot, and many others participated. Although the Senate, of which I was a member, was just about to organize, I hastened to Springfield and reached there at seven o'clock in the evening. I had telegraphed Lincoln of the hour that I should arrive and that I must return at eleven the same night. I went directly from the dépôt to Lincoln's house and rang the bell, which was answered by Lincoln himself opening the door. I doubt whether I wholly concealed my disappointment at meeting him. Tall, gaunt, ungainly, ill clad, with a homeliness of manner that was unique in itself, I confess that my heart sank within me as I remembered that this was the man chosen by a great nation to become its ruler in the gravest period of its history. I remember his dress as if it were but yesterday—snuff-colored and slouchy pantaloons; open black vest, held by a few brass buttons; straight or evening dress-coat, with tightly-fitting sleeves to exaggerate his long, bony arms, and all supplemented by an awkwardness that was uncommon among men of intelligence. Such was the picture I met in the person of Abraham Lincoln. We sat down in his plainly furnished parlor, and were uninterrupted during the nearly four hours that I remained with him, and little by little, as his earnestness, sincerity, and candor were developed in conversation, I forgot all the grotesque qualities which so confounded me when I first greeted him. Before half an hour had passed I learned not only to respect, but, indeed, to reverence the man.

It is needless to give any account of the special mission on which I was called to Springfield, beyond the fact that the tender of a Cabinet position to Pennsylvania was recalled by him on the following day, although renewed and accepted two months later, when the Cabinet was finally formed in Washington. It was after the Pennsylvania Cabinet imbroglio was disposed of that Lincoln exhibited his true self without reserve. For more than two hours he discussed the gravity of the situation and the appalling danger of civil war. Although he had never been in public office outside the Illinois Legislature, beyond a single session of Congress, and had little intercourse with men of national prominence during the twelve years after his return from Washington, he exhibited remarkable knowledge of all the leading public men of the country, and none could mistake the patriotic purpose that inspired him in approaching the mighty responsibility that had been cast upon him by the people. He discussed the slavery question in all its aspects and all the various causes which were used as pretexts for rebellion, and he not only was master of the whole question, but thoroughly understood his duty and was prepared to perform it. During this conversation I had little to say beyond answering an occasional question or suggestion from him, and I finally left him fully satisfied that he understood the political conditions in Pennsylvania nearly as well as I did myself, and entirely assured that of all the public men named for the Presidency at Chicago he was the most competent and the safest to take the helm of the ship of state and guide it through the impending storm. I saw many dark days akin to despair during the four years which recorded the crimsoned annals from Sumter to Appomattox, but I never had reason to change or seriously question that judgment.

I next met Abraham Lincoln at Harrisburg on the 22d of February, 1861, when he passed through the most trying ordeal of his life. He had been in Philadelphia the night be-

fore, where he was advised by letters from General Winfield Scott and his prospective Premier, Senator Seward, that he could not pass through Baltimore on the 23d without grave peril to his life. His route, as published to the world for some days, was from Philadelphia to Harrisburg on the morning of the 22d; to remain in Harrisburg over night as the guest of Governor Curtin; and to leave for Washington the next morning by the Northern Central Railway, that would take him through Baltimore about midday. A number of detectives under the direction of President Felton of the Philadelphia, Wilmington, and Baltimore Railroad, and Allan Pinkerton, chief of the well-known detective agency, were convinced from the information they obtained that Lincoln would be assassinated if he attempted to pass through Baltimore according to the published programme. A conference at the Continental Hotel in Philadelphia on the night of the 21st, at which Lincoln was advised of the admonitions of Scott and Seward, had not resulted in any final determination as to his route to Washington. He was from the first extremely reluctant about any change, but it was finally decided that he should proceed to Harrisburg on the morning of the 22d and be guided by events.

The two speeches made by Lincoln on the 22d of February do not exhibit a single trace of mental disturbance from the appalling news he had received. He hoisted the stars and stripes to the pinnacle of Independence Hall early in the morning and delivered a brief address that was eminently characteristic of the man. He arrived at Harrisburg about noon, was received in the House of Representatives by the Governor and both branches of the Legislature, and there spoke with the same calm deliberation and incisiveness which marked all his speeches during the journey from Springfield to Washington. After the reception at the House another conference was held on the subject of his route to Washington, and, while every person present, with the exception of Lin-

coln, was positive in the demand that the programme should be changed, he still obstinately hesitated. He did not believe that the danger of assassination was serious.

The afternoon conference practically decided nothing, but it was assumed by those active in directing Lincoln's journey that there must be a change. Lincoln dined at the Jones House about five o'clock with Governor Curtin as host of the occasion. I recall as guests the names of Colonel Thomas A. Scott, Colonel Sumner, Colonel Ward H. Lamon, Dr. Wallace, David Davis, Secretary Slifer, Attorney-General Purviance, Adjutant-General Russell, and myself. There were others at the table, but I do not recall them with certainty. Of that dinner circle, as I remember them, only three are now living—Governor Curtin, Colonel Lamon, and the writer. Judd was not a guest, as he was giving personal attention to Mrs. Lincoln, who was much disturbed by the suggestion to separate the President from her, and she narrowly escaped attracting attention to the movements which required the utmost secrecy.

It was while at dinner that it was finally determined that Lincoln should return to Philadelphia and go thence to Washington that night, as had been arranged in Philadelphia the night previous in the event of a decision to change the programme previously announced. No one who heard the discussion of the question could efface it from his memory. The admonitions received from General Scott and Senator Seward were made known to Governor Curtin at the table, and the question of a change of route was discussed for some time by every one with the single exception of Lincoln. He was the one silent man of the party, and when he was finally compelled to speak he unhesitatingly expressed his disapproval of the movement. With impressive earnestness he thus answered the appeal of his friends: "What would the nation think of its President stealing into the capital like a thief in the night?" It was only when the other guests were unanimous in the expression that it was not a question for Lincoln

to determine, but one for his friends to determine for him, that he finally agreed to submit to whatever was decided by those around him.

It was most fortunate that Colonel Scott was one of the guests at that dinner. He was wise and keen in perception and bold and swift in execution. The time was short, and if a change was to be made in Lincoln's route it was necessary for him to reach Philadelphia by eleven o'clock that night or very soon thereafter. Scott at once became master of ceremonies, and everything that was done was in obedience to his directions. There was a crowd of thousands around the hotel, anxious to see the new President and ready to cheer him to the uttermost. It was believed to be best that only one man should accompany Lincoln in his journey to Philadelphia and Washington, and Lincoln decided that Lamon should be his companion. Colonel Sumner, who felt that he had been charged with the safety of the President-elect, and whose silvered crown seemed to entitle him to precedence, earnestly protested against Lincoln leaving his immediate care, but it was deemed unsafe to have more than one accompany him, and the veteran soldier was compelled to surrender his charge. That preliminary question settled, Scott directed that Curtin, Lincoln, and Lamon should at once proceed to the front steps of the hotel, where there was a vast throng waiting to receive them, and that Curtin should call distinctly, so that the crowd could hear, for a carriage, and direct the coachman to drive the party to the Executive Mansion. That was the natural thing for Curtin to do—to take the President to the governor's mansion as his guest, and it excited no suspicion whatever.

Before leaving the dining-room Governor Curtin halted Lincoln and Lamon at the door and inquired of Lamon whether he was well armed. Lamon had been chosen by Lincoln as his companion because of his exceptional physical power and prowess, but Curtin wanted assurance that he was properly equipped for defense. Lamon at once uncovered a

small arsenal of deadly weapons, showing that he was literally armed to the teeth. In addition to a pair of heavy revolvers, he had a slung-shot and brass knuckles and a huge knife nestled under his vest. The three entered the carriage, and, as instructed by Scott, drove toward the Executive Mansion, but when near there the driver was ordered to take a circuitous route and to reach the railroad dépôt within half an hour. When Curtin and his party had gotten fairly away from the hotel I accompanied Scott to the railway dépôt, where he at once cleared one of his lines from Harrisburg to Philadelphia, so that there could be no obstruction upon it, as had been agreed upon at Philadelphia the evening before in case the change should be made. In the mean time he had ordered a locomotive and a single car to be brought to the eastern entrance of the dépôt, and at the appointed time the carriage arrived. Lincoln and Lamon emerged from the carriage and entered the car unnoticed by any except those interested in the matter, and after a quiet but fervent "Good-bye and God protect you!" the engineer quietly moved his train away on its momentous mission.

As soon as the train left I accompanied Scott in the work of severing all the telegraph lines which entered Harrisburg. He was not content with directing that it should be done, but he personally saw that every wire was cut. This was about seven o'clock in the evening. It had been arranged that the eleven o'clock train from Philadelphia to Washington should be held until Lincoln arrived, on the pretext of delivering an important package to the conductor. The train on which he was to leave Philadelphia was due in Washington at six in the morning, and Scott kept faithful vigil during the entire night, not only to see that there should be no restoration of the wires, but waiting with anxious solicitude for the time when he might hope to hear the good news that Lincoln had arrived in safety. To guard against every possible chance of imposition a special cipher was agreed upon that could not possibly be understood by any but the parties to it. It was a

long, weary night of fretful anxiety to the dozen or more in Harrisburg who had knowledge of the sudden departure of Lincoln. No one attempted to sleep. All felt that the fate of the nation hung on the safe progress of Lincoln to Washington without detection on his journey. Scott, who was of heroic mould, several times tried to temper the severe strain of his anxiety by looking up railway matters, but he would soon abandon the listless effort, and thrice we strolled from the dépôt to the Jones House and back again, in aimless struggle to hasten the slowly-passing hours, only to find equally anxious watchers there and a wife whose sobbing heart could not be consoled. At last the eastern horizon was purpled with the promise of day. Scott reunited the broken lines for the lightning messenger, and he was soon gladdened by an unsigned dispatch from Washington, saying, "Plums delivered nuts safely." He whirled his hat high in the little telegraph office as he shouted, "Lincoln's in Washington," and we rushed to the Jones House and hurried a messenger to the Executive Mansion to spread the glad tidings that Lincoln had safely made his midnight journey to the capital.

I have several times heard Lincoln refer to this journey, and always with regret. Indeed, he seemed to regard it as one of the grave mistakes in his public career. He was fully convinced, as Colonel Lamon has stated it, that "he had fled from a danger purely imaginary, and he felt the shame and mortification natural to a brave man under such circumstances." Mrs. Lincoln and her suite passed through Baltimore on the 23d without any sign of turbulence. The fact that there was not even a curious crowd brought together when she passed through the city—which then required considerable time, as the cars were taken across Baltimore by horses—confirmed Lincoln in his belief. It is needless now to discuss the question of real or imaginary danger in Lincoln passing through Baltimore at noonday according to the original programme. It is enough to know that there were reasonable grounds for apprehension that an attempt might be made upon his life,

even if there was not the organized band of assassins that the detectives believed to exist. His presence in the city would have called out an immense concourse of people, including thousands of thoroughly disloyal roughs, who could easily have been inspired to any measure of violence. He simply acted the part of a prudent man in his reluctant obedience to the unanimous decision of his friends in Harrisburg when he was suddenly sent back to Philadelphia to take the midnight train for Washington, and there was no good reason why he should have regretted it; but his naturally sensitive disposition made him always feel humiliated when it recurred to him.

The sensational stories published at the time of his disguise for the journey were wholly untrue. He was reported as having been dressed in a Scotch cap and cloak and as entering the car at the Broad and Prime station by some private alley-way, but there was no truth whatever in any of these statements. I saw him leave the dining-room at Harrisburg to enter the carriage with Curtin and Lamon. I saw him enter the car at the Harrisburg dépôt, and the only change in his dress was the substitution of a soft slouch hat for the high one he had worn during the day. He wore the same overcoat that he had worn when he arrived at Harrisburg, and the only extra apparel he had about him was the shawl that hung over his arm. When he reached West Philadelphia he was met by Superintendent Kenney, who had a carriage in waiting with a single detective in it. Lincoln and Lamon entered the carriage and Kenney mounted the box with the driver. They were in advance of the time for the starting of the Baltimore train, and they were driven around on Broad street, as the driver was informed, in search of some one wanted by Kenney and the detective, until it was time to reach the station. When there they entered by the public doorway on Broad street, and passed directly along with other passengers to the car, where their berths had been engaged. The journey to Washington was entirely uneventful, and at six in the

morning the train entered the Washington station on schedule time. Seward had been advised, by the return of his son from Philadelphia, of the probable execution of this programme, and he and Washburne were in the station and met the President and his party, and all drove together to Willard's Hotel.

CHAPTER FIVE

LINCOLN'S SORE TRIALS

ABRAHAM LINCOLN arrived in Washington on the 23d of February, 1861, to accept the most appalling responsibilities ever cast upon any civil ruler of modern times. If he could have commanded the hearty confidence and co-operation of the leaders of his own party, his task would have been greatly lessened, but it is due to the truth of history to say that few, very few, of the Republican leaders of national fame had faith in Lincoln's ability for the trust assigned to him. I could name a dozen men, now idols of the nation, whose open distrust of Lincoln not only seriously embarrassed, but grievously pained and humiliated, him. They felt that the wrong man had been elected to the Presidency, and only their modesty prevented them, in each case, from naming the man who should have been chosen in his stead. Looking now over the names most illustrious in the Republican councils, I can hardly recall one who encouraged Lincoln by the confidence he so much needed. Even Seward, who had been notified as early as the 8th of December that he would be called as Premier of the new administration, and who soon thereafter had signified his acceptance of the office and continued in the most confidential relations with Lincoln, suddenly, on the 2d of March, formally notified Lincoln of his reconsideration of his acceptance. The only reason given was that circumstances had occurred since his acceptance which seemed to render it his duty "to ask leave to withdraw that consent." The circumstances referred to were the hopeless discord and bitter jeal-

ousies among party-leaders both in and out of the Cabinet.

Lincoln found a party without a policy; the strangest confusion and bitterest antagonisms pervading those who should have been in accord, not only in purpose, but in earnest sympathy, with him in the discharge of his great duties, and he was practically like a ship tempest-tossed without compass or rudder. Even the men called to his Cabinet did not give Lincoln their confidence and co-operation. No two of them seemed to have the same views as to the policy the administration should adopt. Seward ridiculed the idea of serious civil war, and then and thereafter renewed his bond for peace in sixty days, only to be protested from month to month and from year to year. Chase believed in peaceable disunion as altogether preferable to fraternal conflict, and urged his views with earnestness upon the President. Cameron, always eminently practical, was not misled by any sentimental ideas and regarded war as inevitable. Welles was an amiable gentleman without any aggressive qualities whatever, and Smith and Bates were old and conservative, while Blair was a politician with few of the qualities of a statesman.

A reasonably correct idea of the estimate placed upon Lincoln's abilities for his position may be obtained by turning to the eulogy on Seward delivered by Charles Francis Adams in 1873. Adams was a Republican member of Congress when Lincoln was chosen President, and he was Lincoln's Minister to England during the entire period of the war. In eulogizing Seward as the master-spirit of the administration and as the power behind the throne stronger than the throne itself, he said: "I must affirm, without hesitation, that in the history of our government down to this hour no experiment so rash has ever been made as that of electing to the head of affairs a man with so little previous preparation for his task as Mr. Lincoln." Indeed, Lincoln himself seems to have been profoundly impressed with his want of fitness for the position when he was first named as a candidate from his state. In 1859, after he had attained national reputation by his joint

discussion with Douglas in the contest for Senator, Pickett, the editor of an Illinois Republican journal, wrote to him, urging that he should permit the use of his name for President. To this he answered: "I must in candor say I do not think myself fit for the Presidency. I certainly am flattered and gratified that some partial friends think of me in that connection, but I really think it best for our cause that no concerted effort, such as you suggest, should be made." Seward evidently agreed with his eulogist, Charles Francis Adams. That is clearly shown by the fact that in less than one month after the administration had been inaugurated he wrote out and submitted to the President a proposition to change the national issue from slavery to foreign war, in which he advised that war be at once declared against Spain and France unless satisfactory explanations were promptly received, and that the enforcement of the new policy should be individually assumed by the President himself or devolved on some member of his Cabinet. He added that while it was not in his special province, "I neither seek to evade nor assume the responsibility." In other words, Seward boldly proposed to change the national issue by a declaration of war against some foreign power, and to have himself assigned practically as dictator. He assumed that the President was incompetent to his task, that his policy, if accepted, would be committed to himself for execution, and that he meant to be dictator is clearly proved by the fact that in his formal proposition he provides that the policy "once adopted, the debates on it must end and all agree and abide."

Outside of the Cabinet the leaders were equally discordant and quite as distrustful of the ability of Lincoln to fill his great office. Sumner, Trumbull, Chandler, Wade, Henry Winter Davis, and the men to whom the nation then turned as the great representative men of the new political power, did not conceal their distrust of Lincoln, and he had little support from them at any time during his administration. Indeed, but for the support given him by the younger leaders

of that day, among whom Blaine and Sherman were conspicuous, he would have been a President almost without a party. The one man who rendered him the greatest service of all at the beginning of the war was Stephen A. Douglas, his old competitor of Illinois. When the Republican leaders were hesitating and criticising their President, Douglas came to the front with all his characteristic courage and sagacity, and was probably the most trusted of all the Senators at the White House. It is not surprising that there was great confusion in the councils of the Republican leaders when suddenly compelled to face civil war, but it will surprise many intelligent readers at this day to learn of the general distrust and demoralization that existed among the men who should have been a solid phalanx of leadership in the crisis that confronted them. It must be remembered that there were no precedents in history to guide the new President. The relation of the states to the national government had never been defined. The dispute over the sovereignty of the states had been continuous from the organization of the Republic until that time, and men of equal intelligence and patriotism widely differed as to the paramount authority of state and nation. Nor were there any precedents in history of other civilizations that could throw any light upon the dark path of Lincoln. There have been republics and civil wars, but none that furnish any rule that could be applied to the peculiar condition of our dissevered states. The President was therefore compelled to decide for himself in the multitude of conflicting counsels what policy the administration should adopt, and even a less careful and conservative man than Lincoln would have been compelled, from the supreme necessities which surrounded him, to move with the utmost caution.

Lincoln could formulate no policy beyond mere generalities declaring his duty to preserve the integrity of the Union. He saw forts captured and arsenals gutted and States seceding with every preparation for war, and yet he could take no step to prepare the nation for the defense of its own life. The

border states were trembling in the balance, with a predominant Union sentiment in most of them, but ready to be driven into open rebellion the moment that he should declare in favor of what was called "coercion" by force of arms. Coercion and invasion of the sacred soil of the southern states were terms which made even the stoutest southern Union man tremble. As the administration had no policy that it could declare, every leader had a policy of his own, with every invitation to seek to magnify himself by declaring it. The capital was crowded with politicians of every grade. The place-seekers swarmed in numbers almost equal to the locusts of Egypt, and the President was pestered day and night by the leading statesmen of the country, who clamored for offices for their henchmen. I well remember the sad picture of despair his face presented when I happened to meet him alone for a few moments in the executive chamber as he spoke of the heartless spoilsmen who seemed to be utterly indifferent to the grave dangers which threatened the government. He said: "I seem like one sitting in a palace assigning apartments to importunate applicants while the structure is on fire and likely soon to perish in ashes."

Turn where Lincoln might, there was hardly a silver lining to the dark cloud that overshadowed him. The Senate that met in Executive session when he was inaugurated contained but 29 Republicans to 32 Democrats, with one bitterly hostile American, and four vacancies from southern states that never were filled. It was only by the midsummer madness of secession and the retirement of the southern senators that he was given the majority in both branches of Congress, and when he turned to the military arm of the government he was appalled by the treachery of the men to whom the nation should have been able to look for its preservation. If any one would study the most painful and impressive object-lesson on this point, let him turn to Greeley's *American Conflict* and learn from two pictures how the stars of chieftains glittered and faded until unknown men filled their places and led the

Union armies to victory. In the first volume of Greeley's history, which was written just at the beginning of the war and closed with the commencement of hostilities, there is a page containing the portraits of twelve men, entitled "Union Generals." The central figure is the veteran Scott, and around him are Fremont, Butler, McDowell, Wool, Halleck, McClellan, Burnside, Hunter, Hooker, Buell, and Anderson. These were the chieftains in whom the country then confided, and to whom Lincoln turned as the men who could be entrusted with the command of armies. In the second volume of Greeley's history, published after the close of the war, there is another picture entitled "Union Generals," and there is not one face to be found in the last that is in the first. Grant is the central figure of the Heroes of the Union at the close of the war, with the faces of Sherman, Sheridan, Thomas, Meade, Hancock, Blair, Howard, Terry, Curtis, Banks, and Gilmore around him. In short, the military chieftains who saved the Union in the flame of battle had to be created by the exigencies of war, while the men upon whom the President was compelled to lean when the conflict began one by one faded from the list of successful generals.

The ability of the government to protect its own life when wanton war was inaugurated by the southern Confederacy may be well illustrated by an interview between the President, General Winfield Scott, Governor Curtin, and myself immediately after the surrender of Sumter. The President telegraphed to Governor Curtin and to me as Chairman of the Military Committee of the Pennsylvania Senate to come to Washington as speedily as possible for consultation as to the attitude Pennsylvania should assume in the civil conflict that had been inaugurated. Pennsylvania was the most exposed of all the border states, and, being the second state of the Union in population, wealth, and military power, it was of the utmost importance that she should lead in defining the attitude of the loyal states. Sumter was surrendered on Sunday, April 14, 1861, and on Monday morning Governor

Curtin and I were at the White House to meet the President and the Commander-in-Chief of the armies at ten o'clock in the morning. I had never before met General Scott. I had read of him with all the enthusiasm of a boy, as he was a major-general before I was born, had noted with pride his brilliant campaign in Mexico, and remembered that he was accepted by all Americans as the Great Captain of the Age. I assumed, of course, that he was infallible in all matters pertaining to war, and when I met him it was with a degree of reverence that I had seldom felt for any other mortal.

Curtin and I were a few minutes in advance of the appointed time for the conference, and as the Cabinet was in session we were seated in the reception-room. There were but few there when we entered it, and a number of chairs were vacant. We sat down by a window looking out upon the Potomac, and in a few minutes the tall form of General Scott entered. In the mean time a number of visitors had arrived and every chair in the room was occupied. Scott advanced and was cordially greeted by Governor Curtin and introduced to me. He was then quite feeble, unable to mount a horse by reason of a distressing spinal affection; and I well remember the punctilious ideas of the old soldier, who refused to accept either Curtin's chair or mine because there were not three vacant chairs in the room, although he could not remain standing without suffering agony. We presented the ludicrous spectacle of three men standing for nearly half an hour, and one of them feeble in strength and greatly the senior of the others in years, simply because there were not enough chairs for the entire party. With all his suffering he was too dignified even to lean against the wall, although it was evident to both of us that he was in great pain from his ceremonial ideas about accepting the chair of another. When we were ushered into the President's room the practical work of our mission was soon determined. The question had been fully considered by the President and the Secretary of War, who was a Pennsylvanian. Governor Curtin speedily perfected and heartily

approved of the programme they had marked out, and we had little to do beyond informing them how speedily it could be executed. How quickly Pennsylvania responded to the request of the government will be understood when I state that in a single day a bill embracing all the features desired was passed by both branches and approved by Governor Curtin.

It was only after the work of Pennsylvania had been defined and disposed of that I began to get some insight into the utterly hopeless condition of the government. I found General Scott disposed to talk rather freely about the situation, and I ventured to question him as to the condition of the capital and his ability to defend it in case of an attack by General Beauregard. The answer to the first question I ventured was very assuring, coming from one whom I supposed to know all about war, and to one who knew just nothing at all about it. I asked General Scott whether the capital was in danger. His answer was, "No, sir, the capital is not in danger, the capital is not in danger." Knowing that General Scott could not have a large force at his command, knowing also that General Beauregard had a formidable force at his command at Charleston, and that the transportation of an army from Charleston to Washington would be the work of only a few days, I for the first time began to inquire in my own mind whether this great chieftain was, after all, equal to the exceptional necessities of the occasion. I said to him that, if it was a proper question for him to answer, I would like to know how many men he had in Washington for its defense. His prompt answer was, "Fifteen hundred, sir; fifteen hundred men and two batteries." I then inquired whether Washington was a defensible city. This inquiry cast a shadow over the old veteran's face as he answered, "No, sir; Washington is not a defensible city." He then seemed to consider it necessary to emphasize his assertions of the safety of the capital, and he pointed to the Potomac, that was visible from the President's window. Said he: "You see that vessel?—a sloop of war, sir, a sloop of war." I looked out and saw the vessel, but I could

not help thinking, as I looked beyond to Arlington Heights, that one or two batteries, even of the ineffective class of those days, would knock the sloop of war to pieces in half an hour.

As Johnson, Cooper, and a number of other able soldiers had left the army but a short time before, I felt some anxiety to know who were commanding the forces under General Scott in Washington. He gave me their names, and within three days thereafter I saw that two of them had resigned and were already in Richmond and enlisted in the Confederate service. My doubts multiplied, and a great idol was shattered before I left the White House that morning. I could not resist the conviction that General Scott was past all usefulness; that he had no adequate conception of the contest before us; and that he rested in confidence in Washington when there was not a soldier of average intelligence in that city who did not know that Beauregard could capture it at any time within a week. My anxiety deepened with my doubts, and I continued my inquiries with the old warrior by asking how many men General Beauregard had at Charleston. The old chieftain's head dropped almost upon his breast at this question, and a trace of despair was visible as he answered in tremulous tones: "General Beauregard commands more men at Charleston than I command on the continent east of the frontier." I asked him how long it would require Beauregard to transport his army to Washington. He answered that it might be done in three or four days. I then repeated the question, "General, is not Washington in great danger?" The old warrior was at once aroused, straightened himself up in his chair with a degree of dignity that was crushing, and answered—"No, sir, the capital can't be taken; the capital can't be taken, sir." President Lincoln listened to the conversation with evident interest, but said nothing. He sat intently gazing at General Scott, and whirling his spectacles around in his fingers. When General Scott gave the final answer that the capital could not be taken, Lincoln, in his quaint way, said to General Scott, "It does seem to me, general, that if I were Beau-

regard I would take Washington." This expression from the President electrified the old war-lion again, and he answered with increased emphasis, "Mr. President, the capital can't be taken, sir; it can't be taken."

There was but one conclusion that could be accepted as the result of this interview, and that was that the great chieftain of two wars and the worshiped Captain of the Age was in his dotage and utterly unequal to the great duty of meeting the impending conflict. Governor Curtin and I left profoundly impressed with the conviction that the incompetency of General Scott was one of the most serious of the multiplied perils which then confronted the Republic. I need not repeat how General Scott failed in his early military movements; how he divided his army and permitted the enemy to unite and defeat him at Bull Run; how General McClellan, the young Napoleon of the time, was called from his victories in western Virginia to take command of the army; how that change reinspired the loyal people of the nation in the confidence of speedy victories and the overthrow of the rebellion; how he and his chief soon got to cross purposes; and how, after months of quarrel, the old chieftain was prevailed upon to resign his place. The inside history of his retirement has never been written, and it is best that it should not. President Lincoln, Secretary Cameron, and Thomas A. Scott were the only men who could have written it from personal knowledge. They are dead, and an interesting chapter of history has perished with them.

Such was the condition of the government at the opening of our civil war. A great soldier was at the head of our army, with all his faculties weakened by the infirmities of age, and we were compelled to grope in the dark day after day, week after week, month after month, and even year after year, until chieftains could be created to lead our armies to final victories. It must be remembered also that public sentiment had at that time no conception of the cruel sacrifices of war. The fall of a single soldier, Colonel Ellsworth, at Alexandria cast

a profound gloom over the entire country, and the loss of comparatively few men at Big Bethel and Ball's Bluff convulsed the people from Maine to California. No one dreamed of the sacrifice of life that a desperate war must involve. I remember meeting General Burnside, General Heintzelman, and one or two other officers of the Army of the Potomac at Willard's Hotel in December, 1861. The weather had been unusually favorable, the roads were in excellent condition, and there was general impatience at McClellan's tardiness in moving against Manassas and Richmond. I naturally shared the impatience that was next to universal, and I inquired of General Burnside why it was that the army did not move. He answered that it would not be a difficult task for McClellan's army to capture Manassas, march upon Richmond, and enter the Confederate capital; but he added with emphasis that he regarded as conclusive that "It would cost ten thousand men to do it." I was appalled to silence when compelled to consider so great a sacrifice for the possession of the insurgents' capital. Ten times ten thousand men, and even more, fell in the battles between the Potomac and Richmond before the stars and bars fell from the Richmond State House, but in the fall of 1861 the proposition to sacrifice ten thousand lives to possess the Confederate capital would have been regarded by all as too appalling to contemplate. Indeed, we were not only utterly unprepared for war, but we were utterly unprepared for its sacrifices and its bereavements; and President Lincoln was compelled to meet this great crisis and patiently await the fullness of time to obtain chieftains and armies and to school the people to the crimsoned story necessary to tell of the safety of the Republic.

CHAPTER SIX

LINCOLN'S CHARACTERISTICS

ABRAHAM LINCOLN was eminently human. As the old lady said about General Jackson when she had finally reached his presence, "He's only a man, after all." Although much as other men in the varied qualities which go to make up a single character, taking him all in all, "none but himself can be his parallel." Of all the public men I have met, he was the most difficult to analyze. His characteristics were more original, more diversified, more intense in a sober way, and yet more flexible under many circumstances, than I have ever seen in any other. Many have attempted to portray Lincoln's characteristics, and not a few have assumed to do it with great confidence. Those who have spoken most confidently of their knowledge of his personal qualities are, as a rule, those who saw least of them below the surface. He might have been seen every day during his Presidential term without ever reaching the distinctive qualities which animated and guided him, and thus hundreds of writers have assumed that they understood him when they had never seen the inner inspirations of the man at all. He was a stranger to deceit, incapable of dissembling; seemed to be the frankest and freest of conversationalists, and yet few understood him even reasonably well, and none but Lincoln ever thoroughly understood Lincoln. If I had seen less of him I might have ventured with much greater confidence to attempt a portrayal of his individuality, but I saw him many times when Presidential honors



ABRAHAM LINCOLN AND HIS SON TAD

[Photo by Gutekunst, Philadelphia]

were forgotten in Presidential sorrows, and when his great heart throbbed upon his sleeve. It was then that his uncommon qualities made themselves lustrous and often startled and confused his closest friends.

I regard Lincoln as very widely misunderstood in one of the most important attributes of his character. It has been common, during the last twenty-five years,* to see publications relating to Lincoln from men who assumed that they enjoyed his full confidence. In most and perhaps all cases the writers believed what they stated, but those who assumed to speak most confidently on the subject were most mistaken. Lincoln gave his confidence to no living man without reservation. He trusted many, but he trusted only within the carefully-studied limitations of their usefulness, and when he trusted he confided, as a rule, only to the extent necessary to make that trust available. He had as much faith in mankind as is common amongst men, and it was not because he was of a distrustful nature or because of any specially selfish attribute of his character that he thus limited his confidence in all his intercourse with men. In this view of Lincoln I am fully sustained by those who knew him best. The one man who saw more of him in all the varied vicissitudes of his life from early manhood to his elevation to the Presidency was William H. Herndon, who was his close friend and law-partner for a full score of years. In analyzing the character of Lincoln he thus refers to his care as to confidants: "Mr. Lincoln never had a confidant, and therefore never unbosomed himself to others. He never spoke of his trials to me, or, so far as I knew, to any of his friends." David Davis, in whose sober judgment Lincoln had more confidence than in that of his other friends, and who held as intimate relations to him as was possible by any, says: "I knew the man so well; he was the most reticent, secretive man I ever saw or expect to see."

Leonard Swett is well known to have been the one whose

* *The reader will remember this account was written in 1892.*

counsels were among the most welcome to Lincoln, and who doubtless did counsel him with more freedom than any other man. In a letter given in Herndon's *Life of Lincoln* he says: "From the commencement of his life to its close I have sometimes doubted whether he ever asked anybody's advice about anything. He would listen to everybody; he would hear everybody; but he rarely, if ever, asked for opinions." He adds in the same letter: "As a politician and as President he arrived at all his conclusions from his own reflections, and when his conclusions were once formed he never doubted but what they were right." Speaking of his generally assumed frankness of character, Swett says, "One great public mistake of his [Lincoln's] character as generally received and acquiesced in is that he is considered by the people of this country as a frank, guileless, and unsophisticated man. There never was a greater mistake. Beneath a smooth surface of candor and apparent declaration of all his thoughts and feelings he exercised the most exalted tact and wisest discrimination. He handled and moved men remotely as we do pieces upon a chessboard. He retained through life all the friends he ever had, and he made the wrath of his enemies to praise him. This was not by cunning or intrigue in the low acceptation of the term, but by far-seeing reason and discernment. He always told only enough of his plans and purposes to induce the belief that he had communicated all; yet he reserved enough to have communicated nothing."

Herndon, in a lecture delivered on Lincoln to a Springfield audience in 1866, said: "He [Lincoln] never revealed himself entirely to any one man, and therefore he will always to a certain extent remain enveloped in doubt. I always believed I could read him as thoroughly as any man, yet he was so different in many respects from any other one I ever met before or since his time that I cannot say I comprehended him." Ward Lamon, who completes the circle of the men who were closest to Lincoln, the man who was chosen by Lincoln to accompany him on his midnight journey from Harrisburg to

Washington, and whom he appointed Marshal of the District of Columbia to have him in the closest touch with himself, thus describes Lincoln in his biography: "Mr. Lincoln was a man apart from the rest of his kind—unsocial, cold, impassive; neither a good hater nor fond friend." And he adds that Lincoln "made simplicity and candor a mask of deep feelings carefully concealed, and subtle plans studiously veiled from all eyes but one."

I have seen Lincoln many times when he seemed to speak with the utmost candor, I have seen him many times when he spoke with mingled candor and caution, and I have seen him many times when he spoke but little and with extreme caution. It must not be inferred, because of the testimony borne to Lincoln's reticence generally and to his singular methods in speaking on subjects of a confidential nature, that he was ever guilty of deceit. He was certainly one of the most sincere men I have ever met, and he was also one of the most sagacious men that this or any other country has ever produced. He was not a man of cunning, in the ordinary acceptance of the word; not a man who would mislead in any way, unless by silence; and when occasion demanded he would speak with entire freedom as far as it was possible for him to speak at all. I regard him as one who believed that the truth was not always to be spoken, but who firmly believed, also, that only the truth should be spoken when it was necessary to speak at all.

Lincoln's want of trust in those closest to him was often a great source of regret, and at times of mortification. I have many times heard Swett and Lamon, and occasionally Davis, speak of his persistent reticence on questions of the gravest public moment which seemed to demand prompt action by the President. They would confer with him, as I did myself at times, earnestly advising and urging action on his part, only to find him utterly impassible and incomprehensible. Neither by word nor expression could any one form the remotest idea of his purpose, and when he did act in many cases he

surprised both friends and foes. When he nominated Edwin Stanton as Secretary of War there was not a single member of his Cabinet who had knowledge of his purpose to do so until it was done, and when he appointed Salmon Chase Chief-Justice there was not a man living, of the hundreds who had advised him and pressed their friends upon him, who had any intimation as to even the leaning of his mind on the subject. I remember on one occasion, when we were alone in the Executive Chamber, he discussed the question of the Chief-Justiceship for fully half an hour; named the men who had been prominently mentioned in connection with the appointment; spoke of all of them with apparent freedom; sought and obtained my own views as to the wisdom of appointing either of them,—and when the conversation ended I had no more idea as to the bent of his mind than if I had been conversing with the sphinx. I suggested to him, in closing the conversation, that his views on the subject were very much more important than mine, and that I would be very glad to have them, to which he gave this characteristic answer: “Well, McClure, the fact is I’m ‘shut pan’ on that question.”

Lincoln’s intellectual organization has been portrayed by many writers, but so widely at variance as to greatly confuse the general reader. Indeed, he was the most difficult of all men to analyze. He did not rise above the average man by escaping a common mingling of greatness and infirmities. I believe he was very well described in a single sentence by Herndon when he said: “The truth about Mr. Lincoln is, that he read less and thought more than any man in his sphere in America.”* Tested by the standard of many other great men, Lincoln was not great, but tested by the only true standard of his own achievements, he may justly appear in history as one of the greatest of American statesmen. Indeed, in some most essential attributes of greatness I doubt whether any of our public men ever equaled him. We have had men who could take a

* The contention that Lincoln read less would be contested on solid grounds by many Lincoln scholars.—Ed.

higher intellectual grasp of any abstruse problem of statesmanship, but few have ever equaled, and none excelled, Lincoln in the practical, common-sense, and successful solution of the gravest problems ever presented in American history. He possessed a peculiarly receptive and analytical mind. He sought information from every attainable source. He sought it persistently, weighed it earnestly, and in the end reached his own conclusions. When he had once reached a conclusion as to a public duty, there was no human power equal to the task of changing his purpose. He was self-reliant to an uncommon degree, and yet as entirely free from arrogance of opinion as any public man I have ever known.

Judged by the records of his administration, Lincoln is now regarded as the most successful Executive the Republic has ever had. When it is considered what peculiarly embarrassing and momentous issues were presented to him for decision, and issues for which history had no precedents, it is entirely safe to say that no man has ever equaled him as a successful ruler of a free people. This success was due chiefly to one single quality of the man—the will of the people was his guiding star. He sprang from the people and from close to mother earth. He grew up with the people, and in all his efforts, convictions, and inspirations he was ever in touch with the people. When President he looked solely to the considerate judgment of the American people to guide him in the solution of all the vexed questions which were presented to him. In all the struggles of mean ambition and all the bitter jealousies of greatness which constantly surged around him, and in all the constant and distressing discord that prevailed in his Cabinet during the dark days which shadowed him with grief, Lincoln ever turned to study with ceaseless care the intelligent expression of the popular will.

Unlike all Presidents who had preceded him, he came into office without a fixed and accepted policy. Civil War plunged the government into new and most perplexing duties. The people were unschooled to the sad necessities which had to be

accepted to save the Republic. Others would have rushed in to offend public sentiment by the violent acceptance of what they knew must be accepted in the end. These men greatly vexed and embarrassed Lincoln in his sincere efforts to advance the people and the government to the full measure of the sacrifices which were inevitable; but Lincoln waited patiently—waited until in the fullness of time the judgment of the people was ripened for action, and then, and then only, did Lincoln act. Had he done otherwise, he would have involved the country in fearful peril both at home and abroad, and it was his constant study of, and obedience to, the honest judgment of the people of the nation that saved the Republic and that enshrined him in history as the greatest of modern rulers.

If there are yet any intelligent Americans who believe that Lincoln was an innocent, rural, unsophisticated character, it is time that they should be undeceived. I venture the assertion, without fear of successful contradiction, that Abraham Lincoln was the most sagacious of all the public men of his day in either political party. He was therefore the master-politician of his time. He was not a politician as the term is now commonly applied and understood; he knew nothing about the countless methods which are employed in the details of political effort; but no man knew better—indeed, I think no man knew so well as he did—how to summon and dispose of political ability to attain great political results; and this work he performed with unfailing wisdom and discretion in every contest for himself and for the country.

A pointed illustration of his sagacity and of his cautious methods in preventing threatened evil or gaining promised good is presented by his action in 1862 when the first army draft was made in Pennsylvania. There was then no national conscription law, and volunteering had ceased to fill up our shattered armies. A draft under the state law was necessary to fill a requisition made upon Pennsylvania for troops. The need for immediate reinforcements was very pressing, and in

obedience to the personal request of both Lincoln and Governor Curtin I accepted the ungracious task of organizing and executing the draft under the state laws. How promptly the task was executed may be understood when I say that within sixty days the entire state was enrolled, quotas adjusted, the necessary exemptions made, the draft executed, and seventeen organized regiments sent to the front, and without a dollar of cost to either the state or national governments for duties performed in my office beyond the salaries of two clerks. While there were mutterings of disloyalty in a very few sections of Pennsylvania, and they only within a very limited circle, there was one sore spot where open rebellion was threatened. That was Cass township, Schuylkill county. The Mollie Maguires were then just approaching the zenith of their criminal power, and Cass township was the centre of that lawless element. Thirteen murders had been committed in that district within a few years, and not one murderer had been brought to punishment. This banded criminal organization was as disloyal to the government as it was to law, and it was with the utmost difficulty that even an imperfect enumeration had been made and the quota adjusted to be supplied by draft. The draft was made, however, and on the day fixed for the conscripts to take the cars and report at Harrisburg the criminal element of the district not only refused to respond to the call, but its leaders came to the station and drove other conscripts violently from the dépôt.

It was open, defiant rebellion. I at once reported the facts to Secretary Stanton, who promptly answered, directing that the draft should be enforced at every hazard, and placing one Philadelphia regiment and one regiment at Harrisburg subject to the orders of the governor, with instructions to send them at once to the scene of revolt. Fearing that the Secretary did not fully comprehend the peril of a conflict between the military and the citizens, Governor Curtin directed me to telegraph more fully to Secretary Stanton, suggesting his further consideration of the subject. His answer was promptly

given, repeating his order for the military to move at once to Cass township and enforce the law at the point of the bayonet. The regiments were given marching orders, and reached Pottsville on the following day. I felt that a conflict between the military and citizens in any part of the state must be very disastrous to the loyal cause, and after full consultation with Governor Curtin, in obedience to his directions, I telegraphed to Lincoln in cipher asking him to consider the subject well. This was in the early part of the day, and I was surprised and distressed when evening came without any reply. When I entered the breakfast-room of the hotel the next morning I saw seated at the table Assistant Adjutant-General Townsend of the United States Army. I knew him well, and when he saw me he beckoned me to his side and asked me to breakfast with him. We were out of hearing of any others at the table, and he at once stated to me the purpose of his visit. He had arrived at three o'clock in the morning, and was waiting to see me as soon as I should appear. He said: "I have no orders to give you, but I came solely to deliver a personal message from President Lincoln in these words: 'Say to McClure that I am very desirous to have the laws fully executed, but it might be well, in an extreme emergency, to be content with the appearance of executing the laws; I think McClure will understand.' " To this General Townsend added: "I have now fulfilled my mission; I do not know to what it relates."

I of course made no explanation to General Townsend, but hurried from the breakfast-table to summon Benjamin Bannan from Pottsville to Harrisburg as speedily as possible. He was the commissioner of draft for that county, a warm friend of the President, and a man of unusual intelligence and discretion. He reached Harrisburg the same day, and Lincoln's instructions were frankly explained to him. No one had any knowledge of them but ourselves and the Governor. Commissioner Bannan appreciated the necessity of avoiding a collision between the military and the citizens of Cass township, but, said he, "How can it be done? How can the laws

even appear to have been executed?" I told him that in a number of cases evidence had been presented, after the quotas had been adjusted and the draft ordered, to prove that the quotas had been filled by volunteers who had enlisted in some town or city outside of their townships. In all such cases, where the evidence was clear, the order for the draft was revoked because the complement of men had been filled. I said only by such evidence from Cass township could the order for the draft be revoked and the arrest of the conscripted men for service be avoided. He intuitively comprehended the gravity of the situation, and took the first train home. By the next evening he was back and laid before me a number of affidavits in regular form, apparently executed by citizens of Cass township, which, if uncontradicted, proved that their quota was entirely full. I asked no explanations, but at once in-dorsed upon the testimony that as the quota of Cass township had been filled by volunteers, the draft was inoperative in that district and its conscripts would not be held to service.

I have never made inquiry into the method of obtaining those affidavits, and there is none now living who could give any information about it, as Bannan is dead. The Governor had, in the mean time, halted the troops at Pottsville, and as the laws seemed to be executed in peace, the regiments were ordered back by the Governor and the conflict between the military and the Mollie Maguires was averted. Stanton never had knowledge of Lincoln's action in this matter, nor did a single member of his administration know of his intervention. Had Stanton been permitted to have his sway, he would have ruled in the tempest, and Pennsylvania would have inaugurated a rebellion of her own that might have reached fearful proportions, and that certainly would have greatly paralyzed the power of the loyal people of the state. I am quite sure that not until after the war was ended, and probably not for years thereafter, did any but Lincoln, Curtin, Bannan, and myself have any knowledge of this important adjustment of the Cass township rebellion.

CHAPTER SEVEN

LINCOLN IN POLITICS

IF ABRAHAM LINCOLN was not a master politician, I am entirely ignorant of the qualities which make up such a character. In a somewhat intimate acquaintance with the public men of the country for a period of more than a generation, I have never met one who made so few mistakes in politics as Lincoln. The man who could call Seward as Premier of his administration, with Weed the power behind the Premier, often stronger than the Premier himself, and yet hold Horace Greeley even within the ragged edges of the party lines, and the man who could call Simon Cameron to his Cabinet in Pennsylvania without alienating Governor Curtin, and who could remove Cameron from his Cabinet without alienating Cameron, would naturally be accepted as a man of much more than ordinary political sagacity. Indeed, I have never known one who approached Lincoln in the peculiar faculty of holding antagonistic elements to his own support, and maintaining close and often apparently confidential relations with each without offense to the other. This is the more remarkable from the fact that Lincoln was entirely without training in political management. I remember on one occasion, when there was much concern felt about a political contest in Pennsylvania, he summoned half a dozen or more Pennsylvania Republicans to a conference at the White House. When we had gathered there he opened the subject in his quaint way by saying: "You know I never was a contriver; I don't know much about how things are done in politics,

but I think you gentlemen understand the situation in your State, and I want to learn what may be done to ensure the success we all desire." He made exhaustive inquiry of each of the persons present as to the danger-signals of the contest, specially directing his questions to every weak point in the party lines and every strong point of the opposition. He was not content with generalities; he had no respect for mere enthusiasm. What he wanted was sober facts. He had abiding faith in the people, in their intelligence and their patriotism; and he estimated political results by ascertaining, as far as possible, the popular bearing of every vital question that was likely to arise, and he formed his conclusions by his keen intuitive perception as to how the people would be likely to deal with the issues.

While Lincoln had little appreciation of himself as candidate for President as late as 1859, the dream of reaching the Presidency evidently took possession of him in the early part of 1860, and his first efforts to advance himself as a candidate were singularly awkward and infelicitous. He had then no experience whatever as a leader of leaders, and it was not until he had made several discreditable blunders that he learned how much he must depend upon others if he would make himself President. Some Lincoln enthusiast in Kansas, with much more pretensions than power, wrote him in March, 1860, proposing to furnish a Lincoln delegation from that state to the Chicago convention, and suggesting that Lincoln should pay the legitimate expenses of organizing, electing, and taking to the convention the promised Lincoln delegates. To this Lincoln replied that "in the main, the use of money is wrong, but for certain objects in a political contest the use of some is both right and indispensable." And he added, "If you shall be appointed a delegate to Chicago I will furnish \$100 to bear the expenses of the trip." He heard nothing further from the Kansas man until he saw an announcement in the newspapers that Kansas had elected delegates and instructed them for Seward. This was Lincoln's

first disappointment in his effort to organize his friends to attain the Presidential nomination, but his philosophy was well maintained. Without waiting to hear from his friend who had contracted to bring a Lincoln delegation from Kansas he wrote him, saying, "I see by the dispatches that since you wrote Kansas has appointed delegates instructed for Seward. Don't stir them up to anger, but come along to the convention, and I will do as I said about expenses." It is not likely that that unfortunate experience cost Lincoln his \$100, but is worthy of note that soon after his inauguration as President he gave the man a Federal office with a comfortable salary.

When he became seriously enlisted as a candidate for the Presidential nomination, he soon learned that while he could be of value as an adviser and organizer, the great work had to be performed by others than himself. He gathered around him a number of the ablest politicians of the West, among whom were Norman P. Judd, David Davis, Leonard Swett, O. M. Hatch, and Joseph Medill of the *Chicago Tribune*. These men had, for the first time, brought a National Convention to the West, and they had the advantage of fighting for Lincoln on their own ground with the enthusiasm his name inspired as a potent factor in their work. They went there to win, and they left nothing undone within the range of political effort to give him the nomination. Two positions in the Cabinet, one for Pennsylvania and one for Indiana, were positively promised by David Davis at an early period of the contest, when they feared that there might be serious difficulty in uniting the delegations of those states on Lincoln. It is proper to say that Lincoln had no knowledge of these contracts, and had given no such authority, and it is proper, also, to say that the contracts were made in both cases with comparatively irresponsible parties who had little power, if any, in guiding the actions of their respective delegations. Certainly Lane and Curtin, who were the most important factors in bringing their states to the support of Lincoln, not

only were not parties to these contracts, but were entirely ignorant of them until their fulfillment was demanded after Lincoln's election. I have good reason to know that in the case of Pennsylvania that contract, while it did not of itself make General Cameron Secretary of War, had much to do with resolving Lincoln's doubts in favor of Cameron's appointment in the end.

There were no political movements of national importance during Lincoln's administration in which he did not actively, although often hiddenly, participate. It was Lincoln who in 1863 took a leading part in attaining the declination of Curtin as a gubernatorial candidate that year. Grave apprehensions were felt that Curtin could not be re-elected because of the bitterness of the hostility of Cameron and his friends, and also because there were 70,000 Pennsylvania soldiers in the field who could not vote. Lincoln was Curtin's sincere friend, but when Curtin's supporters suggested that his broken health called for his retirement, Lincoln promptly agreed to tender Curtin a first-class foreign mission if he decided to decline a renomination. Curtin accepted the proffered mission, to be assumed at the close of his term, and he published his acceptance and his purpose to withdraw from the field for Governor.

Curtin's declination was responded to within a week by a number of the leading counties of the state peremptorily instructing their delegates to vote for his renomination for Governor. It soon became evident that the party would accept no other leader in the desperate conflict, and that no other candidate could hope to be elected. Curtin was compelled to submit, and he was nominated on the first ballot by more than a two-thirds vote, although bitterly opposed by a number of prominent Federal officers in the state. Lincoln was disappointed in the result—not because he was adverse to Curtin, but because he feared that party divisions would lose the state. Both Lincoln and Stanton made exhaustive efforts to support Curtin after he had been nominated, and all the

power of the government that could be wielded with effect was employed to promote his election. The battle was a desperate one against the late Chief-Justice Woodward, who was a giant in intellectual strength, and who commanded the unbounded confidence and enthusiastic support of his party, but Curtin was elected by over 15,000 majority.

One of the shrewdest of Lincoln's great political schemes was the tender, by an autograph letter, of the French mission to the elder James Gordon Bennett. No one who can form any intelligent judgment of the political exigencies of that time can fail to understand why the venerable independent journalist received this mark of favor from the President. Lincoln had but one of the leading journals of New York on which he could rely for positive support. That was Raymond's New York *Times*. Greeley's *Tribune* was the most widely read Republican journal of the country, and it was unquestionably the most potent in moulding Republican sentiment. Its immense weekly edition, for that day, reached the more intelligent masses of the people in every state of the Union, and Greeley was not in accord with Lincoln. Lincoln knew how important it was to have the support of the *Herald*, and he carefully studied how to bring its editor into close touch with himself. The outlook for Lincoln's re-election was not promising. Bennett had strongly advocated the nomination of General McClellan by the Democrats, and that was ominous of hostility to Lincoln; and when McClellan was nominated (in 1864) he was accepted on all sides as a most formidable candidate. It was in this emergency that Lincoln's political sagacity served him sufficiently to win the *Herald* to his cause, and it was done by the confidential tender of the French mission. Bennett did not break over to Lincoln at once, but he went by gradual approaches. His first step was to declare in favor of an entirely new candidate, which was an utter impossibility. He opened a leader on the subject thus: "Lincoln has proved a failure; McClellan has proved a failure; Fremont has proved a failure; let us have a new can-

didate." Lincoln, McClellan, and Fremont were then all in the field as nominated candidates, and the Fremont defection was a serious threat to Lincoln. Of course, neither Lincoln nor McClellan declined, and the *Herald*, failing to get the new man it knew to be an impossibility, squarely advocated Lincoln's re-election.

Without consulting any one, and without any public announcement whatever, Lincoln wrote to Bennett, asking him to accept the mission to France. The offer was declined. Bennett valued the offer very much more than the office, and from that day until the day of his death he was one of Lincoln's most appreciative friends and hearty supporters on his own independent line. The tender of the French mission to Bennett has been disputed, but I am not mistaken about it. W. O. Bartlett, a prominent member of the New York bar, and father of the present Judge Bartlett of the Supreme Court of that State, had personal knowledge of Lincoln's autograph letter that was delivered to Bennett, and Judge Bartlett yet has the original letter, unless he has parted with it within the last few years. Bennett was not only one of the ablest and one of the most sagacious editors of his day, but he was also one of the most independent, and in controversy one of the most defiant. He was in a position to render greater service to Lincoln and to the country in its desperate civil war than any other one man in American journalism. He did not pretend to be a Republican; on the contrary, he was Democratic in all his personal sympathies and convictions, but he gave a faithful support to the war, although often freely criticising the policy of the administration. He had no desire for public office, but he did desire, after he had acquired wealth and newspaper power, just the recognition that Lincoln gave him, and I doubt whether any one thing during Bennett's life ever gave him more sincere gratification than this voluntary offer of one of the first-class missions of the country, made in Mr. Lincoln's own handwriting, and his opportunity to decline the same. Looking as Lincoln did to

the great battle for his re-election, this was one of the countless sagacious acts by which he strengthened himself from day to day, and it did much, very much, to pave the way for his overwhelming majority of 1864.

That Lincoln understood practical politics after he had been nominated for a second term is very clearly illustrated in the letter he wrote to General Sherman on the 19th of September, 1864. The states of Indiana, Ohio, and Pennsylvania then voted in October for state offices, and Indiana was desperately contested. Ohio was regarded as certain, and Pennsylvania had only Congressmen and local officers to elect. The soldiers of Indiana could not vote in the field, and Lincoln's letter to Sherman, who commanded the major portion of the Indiana troops, appeals to him, in Lincoln's usual cautious manner, to furlough as many of his soldiers home for the October election as he could safely spare. His exact language is: "Anything you can safely do to let your soldiers, or any part of them, go home to vote at the state election will be greatly in point." To this he adds: "This is in no sense an order; it is simply intended to impress you with the importance to the army itself of your doing all you safely can, yourself being the judge of what you can safely do." While this was "in no sense an order," it was practically a command that Sherman promptly and generously obeyed, and the result was that Morton was elected Governor by some 22,000 majority. It was at Lincoln's special request that General Logan left his command and missed the march to the sea, to stump Indiana and Illinois in the contest of 1864. He was one of the ablest and most impressive of all the campaigners of the West, and it was regarded by Lincoln as more important that Logan should be on the hustings than in command of his corps.

I recall a pointed illustration of Lincoln's rare sagacity when confronted with embarrassing political complications that occurred in 1862, when I was in charge of the military department of Pennsylvania pertaining to the draft for troops

made under the state law. Harrisburg was an important centre of military supplies, as well as the political centre of the state. Immense army contracts were there awarded and executed under officers assigned to duty at that place. After the draft had been made the conscripts began to pour into the capital by thousands, and, as the demand for reinforcements in the field was very pressing, I called upon the military officer of the city and urged upon him the necessity of mustering the new men as promptly as possible. To my surprise, he mustered only two companies the first day out of a thousand men. On the second day, notwithstanding my earnest appeal to him, he mustered no more than two companies, and on the third day, when I had over 5000 men in camp, a mere mob without organization or discipline, the same tedious process of mustering was continued. I telegraphed Secretary Stanton that I had many men in camp, and that they were arriving in large numbers, but that I could not have them mustered—that I could forward a regiment of troops every day if the government would furnish the officers to muster and organize them. A prompt answer came that it would be done. The following morning a new officer appeared, of course subordinate to the commandant of the place who had charge of the mustering, and he promptly mustered an entire regiment the first day. On the following morning he was relieved from duty and ordered elsewhere, and the mustering again fell back to two companies a day.

In the mean time over 7000 men had been gathered into the camp, and it was evident that the question of supplying the camp and the interests of contractors had become paramount to the reinforcement of the army. I telegraphed Lincoln that I would see him in Washington that night, and hurried on to correct the evil by personal conference with him. The case was a very simple one, and he readily took in the situation. He knew that I had labored day and night for two months, without compensation or the expectation of it, to hasten the Pennsylvania troops to the aid of our soldiers in

the field, and I said to him that if he would send mustering officers to organize them promptly, I would return and finish the work; if not, I would abandon it and go home. Lincoln was greatly pained at the development, but he understood that a change of military officers at Harrisburg, such as this occasion seemed to demand, would involve serious political complications. He was of all things most desirous to strengthen our shattered armies, and it was evident very soon that he meant to do so in some way, but without offense to the political power that controlled the military assignments at Harrisburg. Without intimating his solution of the problem, he rang his bell and instructed his messenger to bring Adjutant-General Thomas to the executive chamber. Soon after the Adjutant-General appeared, and Lincoln said: "General, what is the military rank of the senior officer at Harrisburg?" To which the Adjutant-General replied: "Captain, sir," and naming the officer. Lincoln promptly said in reply: "Bring me a commission immediately for Alexander K. McClure as Assistant Adjutant-General of the United States Volunteers, with the rank of major." The Adjutant-General bowed himself out, when I immediately said to Lincoln that I could not consent to be subject to arbitrary military orders—that I desired no compensation for the work I performed, and I must decline the honor he proposed to confer upon me. In his quiet way he replied: "Well, McClure, try my way; I think that will get the troops on without delay and without treading on anybody's toes. I think if you will take your commission back to Harrisburg, call upon the captain in command there to muster you into the service of the United States, and show him your assignment to duty there, you will have no trouble whatever in getting the troops organized and forwarded as rapidly as you wish. Now try it, won't you?"

I saw the wisdom of the suggestion, and well understood why the President desired to avoid the offense that would have been given by the removal of the military officers, and I agreed to try his plan. When I returned to Harrisburg the

next day I sent for the senior officer to come to my office. He came in with all the dignity and arrogance of an offended Caesar and spoke to me with bare civility. I quietly handed him my commission, requested him to muster me into the military service, and also exhibited the order assigning me for duty at Harrisburg. When he saw my commission his hat was immediately removed and he was as obsequious as he had been insolent before. When he had finished mustering me into the service I said to him, "I presume you understand what this means. I don't propose to make any display of military authority or to interfere with anything except that which I have immediately in hand. There must be a regiment of troops mustered and forwarded from this state every day until the troops in camp are all sent to the field. Good-morning." He immediately bowed himself out, saluting in military style as he did so—a grace that I had not yet mastered sufficiently to return—and from that day until the camp was emptied of conscripts a regiment of troops was mustered daily and forwarded to Washington. That was the only military authority I ever exercised, and few knew of the military dignity I had so suddenly attained. When the troops were forwarded to the field and the accounts settled I resigned my commission as quietly as I received it and sent my resignation to the President, who, as he had voluntarily promised, ordered its immediate acceptance. The officer who was thus so unexpectedly superseded, and who was so promptly made to render efficient service to the country by Lincoln's admirable strategy, is no longer living, and I omit his name. He learned how Lincoln could discipline a soldier, and he profited by the lesson.

CHAPTER EIGHT

LINCOLN AND EMANCIPATION

ABRAHAM LINCOLN was not a sentimental Abolitionist. Indeed, he was not a sentimentalist on any subject. He was a man of earnest conviction and of sublime devotion to his faith. In many of his public letters and state papers he was as poetic as he was epigrammatic, and he was singularly felicitous in the pathos that was so often interwoven with his irresistible logic. But he never contemplated the abolition of slavery until the events of the war not only made it clearly possible, but made it an imperious necessity. As the sworn Executive of the nation it was his duty to obey the Constitution in all its provisions, and he accepted that duty without reservation. He knew that slavery was the immediate cause of the political disturbance that culminated in civil war, and I know that he believed from the beginning that if war should be persisted in, it could end only in the severance of the Union or the destruction of slavery. His supreme desire was peace, alike before the war, during the war, and in closing the war. He exhausted every means within his power to teach the Southern people that slavery could not be disturbed by his administration as long as they themselves obeyed the Constitution and laws which protected slavery, and he never uttered a word or did an act to justify, or even excuse, the South in assuming that he meant to make any warfare upon the institution of slavery beyond protecting the free Territories from its desolating tread.

It was not until the war had been in progress for nearly two

years that Lincoln decided to proclaim the policy of Emancipation, and then he was careful to assume the power as warranted under the Constitution only by the supreme necessities of war. There was no time from the inauguration of Lincoln until the 1st of January, 1863, that the South could not have returned to the Union with slavery intact in every state. His preliminary proclamation, dated September 22, 1862, gave notice that on the 1st of January, 1863, he would by public proclamation, "warranted by the Constitution upon military necessity," declare that "all persons held as slaves within any State, or designated part of the State, the people whereof shall then be in rebellion against the United States, shall be thenceforward and for ever free." Every insurgent state had thus more than three months' formal notice that the war was not prosecuted for the abolition of slavery, but solely for the restoration of the Union, and that they could, by returning and accepting the authority of the National Government at any time before the 1st of January, 1863, preserve slavery indefinitely. Lincoln's letter to Horace Greeley, written just one month before his preliminary Emancipation Proclamation, presents in the clearest and most concise manner Lincoln's views on the subject of slavery and the Union. After saying that if he could save the Union without freeing any slaves he would do it; that if he could save it by freeing all the slaves he would do it; and that if he could save it by freeing some and leaving others he would also do that, he adds: "What I do about slavery and the colored race I do because I believe it helps to save this Union, and what I forbear I forbear because I do not believe it would help to save the Union."

As President of the Republic, Lincoln was governed at every step by his paramount duty to prevent the dismemberment of the nation and to restore the Union and its people to fraternal relations. The best expression of his own views and aims in the matter is given in a single brief sentence, uttered by himself on the 13th of September, 1862, only nine days before he issued the preliminary proclamation. It was in re-

sponse to an appeal from a large delegation of Chicago clergymen, representing nearly or quite all the religious denominations of that city, urging immediate Emancipation. He heard them patiently, as he always did those who were entitled to be heard at all, and his answer was given in these words: "I have not decided against a proclamation of liberty to the slaves, but hold the subject under advisement, and I can assure you the matter is on my mind by day and night more than any other. Whatever shall appear to be God's will, I will do." However Lincoln's religious views may be disputed, he had a profound belief in God and in God's immutable justice, and the sentence I have just quoted tells the whole story of Lincoln's action in the abolition of slavery. He did not expect miracles—indeed, he was one of the last men to believe in miracles at all—but he did believe that God overruled all human actions; that all individuals charged with grave responsibility were but the means in the hands of the Great Ruler to accomplish the fulfillment of justice. Congressman Isaac N. Arnold, whom Lincoln once declared to me to be the one member of the House in whose personal and political friendship he had absolute faith, speaking of the earnest appeals made to Lincoln for Emancipation, says: "Mr. Lincoln listened not unmoved to such appeals, and, seeking prayerful guidance of Almighty God, the Proclamation of Emancipation was prepared. It had been, in fact, prepared in July, 1862."

Thus from July until September, during which time there was the greatest possible pressure on Lincoln for an Emancipation policy, his proclamation had been formulated, but his usual caution had prevented him from intimating it to any outside of his Cabinet. It was the gravest step ever taken by any civil ruler in this or any other land, and military success was essential to maintain and execute the policy of Emancipation after it had been declared. Had McClellan been successful in his Peninsula campaign, or had Lee been defeated in the second conflict of Manassas, without bringing peace,

the proclamation would doubtless have been issued with the prestige of such victory. Under the shivering hesitation among even Republicans throughout the North, Lincoln felt that it needed the prestige of a military victory to assure its cordial acceptance by very many of the supporters of the government. The battle of Antietam, fought by the only general of that time who had publicly declared against an Emancipation policy, was the first victory the Army of the Potomac had achieved in 1862, and five days after the Antietam victory the preliminary proclamation was issued.

Only the careful student of the history of the war can have any just conception of the gradual manner in which Lincoln approached Emancipation. He long and earnestly sought to avoid it, believing then that the Union could be best preserved without the violent destruction of slavery; and when he appreciated the fact that the leaders of the rebellion were unwilling to entertain any proposition for the restoration of the Union, he accepted the destruction of slavery as an imperious necessity, but he sought to attain it with the least possible disturbance. The first direct assault made upon slavery was by Secretary Cameron's overruled annual report in December, 1861, in which he advised the arming of slaves.* The first Congress that sat during the war made steady strides toward the destruction of slavery by the passage of five important laws. The first abolished slavery in the District of Columbia; the second prohibited slavery in all the Territories of the United States; the third gave freedom to the escaped slaves of all who were in rebellion; the fourth gave lawful authority for the enlistment of colored men as soldiers; and the fifth made a new article of war, prohibiting any one in the military or naval service from aiding in the arrest or return of a fugitive slave under pain of dismissal. Slavery was

* McClure here omits Fremont's military proclamation during the summer of 1861, which attempted to free slaves in Missouri, but which was annulled by Lincoln. See also page 151, reference to Cameron's instructions to Gen. Butler, and the Fremont episode.—Ed.

abolished in the District of Columbia as early as April, 1862, the act having passed the Senate by 29 to 6, and the House by 92 to 38. A bill prohibiting slavery in the Territories was passed on the 19th of June, and a bill giving freedom to slaves of rebellious masters who performed military service was passed on the 17th of July.

Thus was Congress steadily advancing toward Emancipation, and as early as March, 1862, Lincoln had proposed his plan of compensated Emancipation. On the 6th of March he sent a special message to Congress recommending the adoption of the following joint resolution:

RESOLVED, That the United States ought to co-operate with any State which may adopt gradual abolishment of slavery, giving to such State pecuniary aid, to be used by such State, in its discretion, to compensate for the inconvenience, public and private, produced by such change of system.

His message very earnestly pressed upon Congress the importance of adopting such a policy, and upon the country the importance of accepting it, North and South. His concluding sentence is: "In full view of my great responsibility to my God and to my country, I earnestly beg the attention of Congress and the people to the subject." Again, when revoking General Hunter's order of the 9th of May, 1862, declaring all slaves free within his military district, Lincoln made a most impressive appeal to the people of the South on the subject of compensated Emancipation. He said: "I do not argue; I beseech you to make the argument for yourselves. You cannot, if you would, be blind to the signs of the times. . . . The change it contemplates would come gently as the dews of heaven not rending or wrecking anything. Will you not embrace it? So much good has not been done by any one effort in all past time as, in the providence of God, it is now your high privilege to do. May the vast future not have to lament that you have neglected it." Soon after this Lincoln had an interview with the Congressional delegations from the

border slave states, at which he again earnestly urged them to accept compensated Emancipation. Speaking of that interview, Lincoln said: "I believed that the indispensable necessity for military Emancipation and arming the blacks would come unless averted by gradual and compensated Emancipation." Again in July, 1862, only two months before he issued the preliminary proclamation, Lincoln summoned the delegates from the border slave states to a conference with him, and again most persuasively appealed to them to accept gradual and compensated Emancipation. He said to them: "I do not speak of Emancipation at once, but of a decision at once to emancipate gradually." He also clearly foreshadowed to them that if they refused it, more violent Emancipation must come. He said: "The pressure in this direction is still upon me and is increasing. By conceding what I now ask you can relieve me, and much more can relieve the country, on this important point." He concluded with these eloquent words: "Our common country is in great peril, demanding the loftiest views and boldest action to bring a speedy relief. Once relieved, its form of government is saved to the world; its beloved history and cherished memories are vindicated, and its happy future fully assured and rendered inconceivably grand. To you, more than to any others, the privilege is given to assure that happiness and swell that grandeur, and to link your names therewith for ever."

Strange as it may now seem, in view of the inevitable tendency of events at that time, these appeals of Lincoln were not only treated with contempt by those in rebellion, but the border state congressmen, who had everything at stake, and who in the end were compelled to accept forcible Emancipation without compensation, although themselves not directly involved in rebellion, made no substantial response to Lincoln's efforts to save their states and people. Thus did the states in rebellion disregard repeated importunities from Lincoln to accept Emancipation with payment for their slaves. During long weary months he had made temperate utterance

on every possible occasion, and by every official act that could direct the attention of the country he sought to attain the least violent solution of the slavery problem, only to learn the bitter lesson that slavery would make no terms with the government, and that it was the inspiration of rebellious armies seeking the destruction of the Republic. Soon after his appeal to the Congressmen of the border states in July, 1862, Lincoln prepared his Emancipation Proclamation, and quietly and patiently waited the fullness of time for proclaiming it, still hoping that peace might come without resort to the extreme measure of military and uncompensated Emancipation. Seeing that the last hope of any other method of peace had failed, he issued the preliminary proclamation on the 22d of September, 1862, and his final proclamation on the 1st of January following; and there never was a day from that time until Lincoln's death that he ever entertained, even for a moment, the question of receding from the freedom he had proclaimed to the slaves. But while he was compelled to accept the issue of revolutionary Emancipation, he never abandoned the idea of compensated Emancipation until the final overthrow of Lee's army in 1865. He proposed it to his Cabinet in February of that year, only to be unanimously rejected, and I personally know that he would have suggested it to Stephens, Campbell, and Hunter at the Hampton Roads Conference in February, 1865, had not Vice-President Stephens, as the immediate representative of Jefferson Davis, frankly stated at the outset that he was instructed not to entertain or discuss any proposition that did not recognize the perpetuity of the Confederacy. That statement from Stephens precluded the possibility of Lincoln making any proposition, or even suggestion, whatever on the subject. In a personal interview with Jefferson Davis when I was a visitor in his house at Bevoir, Mississippi, fifteen years after the close of the war, I asked him whether he had ever received any intimation about Lincoln's desire to close the war by the payment of \$400,000,000 for emancipated slaves. He said that he had not heard of it. I asked him

whether he would have given such instructions to Stephens if he had possessed knowledge of the fact. He answered that he could not have given Stephens any other instructions than he did under the circumstances, because as President of the Confederacy he could not entertain any question involving its dissolution, that being a subject entirely for the states themselves.

Lincoln treated the Emancipation question from the beginning as a very grave matter-of-fact problem to be solved for or against the destruction of slavery as the safety of the Union might dictate. He refrained from Emancipation for eighteen months after the war had begun, simply because he believed during that time that he might best save the Union by saving slavery, and had the development of events proved that belief to be correct he would have permitted slavery to live with the Union. When he became fully convinced that the safety of the government demanded the destruction of slavery, he decided, after the most patient and exhaustive consideration of the subject, to proclaim his Emancipation policy. It was not founded solely or even chiefly on the sentiment of hostility to slavery. If it had been, the proclamation would have declared slavery abolished in every state of the Union; but he excluded the slave states of Delaware, Maryland, and Tennessee, and certain parishes in Louisiana, and certain counties in Virginia, from the operation of the proclamation, declaring, in the instrument that has now become immortal, that "which excepted parts are for the present left precisely as if this proclamation were not issued." Thus if only military Emancipation had been achieved by the President's proclamation, it would have presented the singular spectacle of Tennessee in the heart of the South, Maryland and Delaware north of the Potomac, and nearly one-half of Louisiana and one-half of Virginia with slavery protected, while freedom was accorded to the slaves of all the other slave-holding states. Lincoln evidently regarded the Emancipation policy as the most momentous in the history of American

statesmanship, and as justified only by the extreme necessity of weakening the rebellion that then threatened the severance of the Union.

From the very day of his inauguration until he issued his Emancipation Proclamation, Lincoln was constantly importuned by the more radical element of his supporters to declare his purpose to abolish slavery. Among them were a number of the ablest leaders of his party in the Senate and House, and some of them as impracticable in their methods as they were imperious in their demands. That he was glad of the opportunity to destroy slavery none can doubt who knew him, but he patiently bore the often irritating complaints of many of his friends until he saw that slavery and the Union could not survive together, and that the country was at least measurably prepared to accept and support the new policy. He was many times threatened with open rebellion against his administration by some of the most potent Republicans because of his delay in declaring the Emancipation policy, but he waited until the time had come in the fall of 1862, when he felt that it was not only a necessity of war, but a political necessity as well. Another very grave consideration that led him to accept Emancipation when he did was the peril of England and France recognizing the Confederacy and thereby involving us in war with two of the greatest powers of Europe. The pretext on which was based the opposition of England to the Union cause in the early part of the war was the maintenance of slavery by the government while prosecuting a war against a slaveholders' rebellion, and it seemed to be an absolute necessity that our government should accept the Emancipation policy to impair the force of the public sentiment in England that demanded the recognition of the South as an independent government. These three weighty considerations, each in itself sufficient to have decided Lincoln's action, combined to dictate his Emancipation policy in the early fall of 1862. The proclamation did not in itself abolish slavery, but the positive declaration in the proclamation "that

the Executive government of the United States, including the military and naval authorities thereof, will recognize and maintain the freedom of said persons," gave notice to every slaveholder and promise to every slave that every bondman brought within the lines of the Union army would thereafter be for ever free.

While the Emancipation Proclamation inflicted a mortal wound upon slavery and assured its absolute extinction, sooner or later, throughout the entire country, Lincoln fully appreciated the fact that much was yet to be done, even beyond victories in the field, to efface the blot of slavery from the Republic. As early as the 14th of January, 1863, Representative Wilson of Iowa, then chairman of the Judiciary Committee, and now a United States Senator, reported a proposed amendment to the Constitution declaring slavery "for ever prohibited in the United States." On the 10th of February, 1864, Senator Trumbull reported from the Judiciary Committee of that body a proposed amendment that was finally adopted in 1865, and is now part of the fundamental law of the nation. It was passed in the Senate on the 18th of April by a vote of 38 to 6. It was defeated in the House by a vote of 93 in its favor and 65 against it, lacking the requisite two-thirds. Seeing that the amendment was lost, Ashley of Ohio changed his vote from the affirmative to the negative with a view of entering a motion to reconsider, and the subject went over until the next session. On the 6th of January, 1865, Ashley made his motion to reconsider and called up the proposed amendment for another vote. One of the most interesting and able debates of that time was precipitated by Ashley's motion, and the notable speech of the occasion was made by Rollins of Missouri, who had been a large slaveholder, and who declared that "the rebellion instigated and carried on by slaveholders has been the death-knell of the institution." Stevens, the great apostle of freedom from Pennsylvania and the Great Commoner of the war, closed the debate, and probably on no other occasion in the history of

Congress was such intense anxiety exhibited as when the roll was called on the adoption or rejection of the amendment. The Republicans did not have two-thirds of the House, but several Democrats openly favored the amendment and a number of others were known to be uncertain. The first break in the Democratic line was when the name of Coffroth of Pennsylvania was called, who promptly answered ay, and was greeted with thunders of applause in the House and galleries. He was followed by Ganson, Herrick, Nelson, Odell, Radford, and Steele, Democrats from New York, by English from Connecticut, and by McAlister from Pennsylvania, and when the Speaker declared that the amendment had been adopted by 119 yeas to 56 nays, being more than the requisite constitutional majority, the great battle of Emancipation was substantially won, and Lincoln hailed it with a measure of joy second only to his delight at the announcement of Lee's surrender. Before the members left their seats salvos of artillery announced to the people of the capital that the Constitutional amendment abolishing slavery had been adopted by Congress, and the victorious leaders rushed to the White House to congratulate Lincoln on the final achievement of Emancipation.*

Lincoln had thus dealt the deathblow to slavery by his proclamation, but it was not until after he had sealed his devotion to free government by giving his life to the assassin's hate that the great work was consummated and the Republic was entirely free from the stain of human bondage.

The most earnest discussions I ever had with Lincoln were on the subject of his Emancipation Proclamation. I knew the extraordinary pressure that came from the more radical element of the Republican party, embracing a number of its ablest leaders, such as Sumner, Chase, Wade, Chandler, and others, but I did not know, and few were permitted to know, the importance of an Emancipation policy in restraining the

* After ratification by the requisite number of states, the amendment became law in December, 1865.—Ed.

recognition of the Confederacy by France and England. I was earnestly opposed to an Emancipation Proclamation by the President. For some weeks before it was issued I saw Lincoln frequently, and in several instances sat with him for hours at a time after the routine business of the day had been disposed of and the doors of the White House were closed. I viewed the issue solely from a political standpoint, and certainly had the best of reasons for the views I pressed upon Lincoln, assuming that political expediency should control his action. I reminded him that the proclamation would not liberate a single slave—that the Southern armies must be overthrown, and that the territory held by them must be conquered by military success, before it could be made effective. To this Lincoln answered: “It does seem like the Pope’s bull against the comet;” but that was the most he ever said in any of his conversations to indicate that he might not issue it. I appealed to him to issue a military order as Commander-in-chief of the Army and Navy, proclaiming that every slave of a rebellious owner should be for ever free when brought within our lines. Looking simply to practical results, that would have accomplished everything that the Emancipation Proclamation achieved; but it was evident during all these discussions that Lincoln viewed the question from a very much higher standpoint than I did, although, as usual, he said but little and gave no clue to the bent of his mind on the subject.

I reminded Lincoln that political defeat would be inevitable in the great states of the Union in the elections soon to follow if he issued the Emancipation Proclamation—that New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois would undoubtedly vote Democratic and elect Democratic delegations to the next Congress. He did not dispute my judgment as to the political effect of the proclamation, but I never left him with any reasonable hope that I had seriously impressed him on the subject. Every political prediction I made was fearfully fulfilled in the succeeding October and

November elections. New York elected Seymour Governor by 10,700 majority, and chose 17 Democratic and 14 Republican Congressmen. New Jersey elected a Democratic Governor by 14,500, and 4 Democrats and 1 Republican to Congress. Pennsylvania elected the Democratic state ticket by 3500 majority and 13 Democrats and 11 Republicans to Congress, with a Democratic Legislature that chose Buckalew to the United States Senate. Ohio elected the Democratic state ticket by 5500 majority and 14 Democrats and 2 Republicans to Congress, Ashley and Schenck being the only two who escaped in the political Waterloo. Indiana elected the Democratic state ticket by 9500 majority and 7 Democrats and 4 Republicans to Congress, with 30 Democratic majority in the Legislature. Illinois elected the Democratic state ticket by 16,500 majority and 9 Democrats and 5 Republicans to Congress, and 28 Democratic majority in the Legislature. Confidently anticipating these disastrous political results, I could not conceive it possible for Lincoln to successfully administer the government and prosecute the war with the six most important loyal states of the Union declaring against him at the polls; but Lincoln knew that the majority in Congress would be safe, as the rebellious states were excluded, and the far West and New England were ready to sustain the Emancipation policy; and he appreciated, as I did not, that the magnitude of his act cast all mere considerations of expediency into nothingness. He dared to do the right for the sake of the right. I speak of this the more freely because, in the light of events as they appear today, he rose to the sublimest duty of his life, while I was pleading the mere expedient of a day against a record for human freedom that must be immortal while liberty has worshipers in any land or clime.

Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation because it was an imperious duty, and because the time had come when any temporizing with the question would have been more fatal than could possibly be any temporary revolt against the manly declaration of right. He felt strong enough to main-

tain the freedom he proclaimed by the military and naval power of the government. He believed it to be the most mortal wound that could be inflicted upon the Confederacy. He believed that it would disarm the strong anti-Union sentiment that seemed to be fast pressing the English government to the recognition of the South, and he believed that, however public sentiment might falter for a time, like the disturbed and quivering needle it would surely settle to the pole. He did not issue it for the mere sentiment of unshackling four millions of slaves, nor did he then dream of universal citizenship and suffrage to freedmen. In the last public address that he ever delivered, on the 11th of April, 1865, speaking of Negro suffrage, he said: "I would myself prefer that suffrage were now conferred upon the very intelligent and on those who served our cause as soldiers." He believed it to be simply an act of justice that every colored man who had fought for his freedom and for the maintenance of the Union, and was honorably discharged from the military service, should be clothed with the right of franchise; and he believed that "the very intelligent" should also be enfranchised as exemplars of their race and an inspiration to them for advancement. He was always stubbornly for justice, stubbornly for the right, and it was his sublime devotion to the right in the face of the most appalling opposition that made the name of Abraham Lincoln immortal as the author of the Emancipation Proclamation, on which he justly invoked "the considerate judgment of mankind and the gracious favor of Almighty God."

CHAPTER NINE

LINCOLN AND HAMLIN

THE fact that Abraham Lincoln conceived and executed the scheme to nominate Andrew Johnson for Vice-President in 1864 has been feebly disputed, but is now accepted as the truth of history. It was not an arbitrary exercise of political power on the part of Lincoln. He had no prejudice against Hannibal Hamlin to inspire him to compass Hamlin's defeat. He had no special love for Andrew Johnson to lead him to overthrow his old associate of 1860 and make the Military Governor of an insurgent state his fellow-candidate for 1864. Hamlin was not in close sympathy with Lincoln; on the contrary, he was known as one who passively rather than actively strengthened a powerful cabal of Republican leaders in their aggressive hostility to Lincoln and his general policy; but Lincoln was incapable of yielding to prejudice, however strong, in planning his great campaign for re-election in 1864. Had Hamlin been ten times more offensive than he was to Lincoln, it would not have halted Lincoln for a moment in favoring Hamlin's renomination if he believed it good politics to do so. He rejected Hamlin not because he hated him; he accepted Johnson not because he loved him. He was guided in what he did, or what he did not, in planning the great campaign of his life, that he believed involved the destiny of the country itself, by the single purpose of making success as nearly certain as possible.

Hamlin was nominated for the Vice-Presidency in 1860 simply because he was a representative Republican fresh from

the Democratic party. Another consideration that favored his selection was the fact that his state had been carried into the Republican party under his leadership, and that its state election in September would be the finger-board of success or defeat in the national contest. His position as Representative, Senator, and Governor, and his admitted ability and high character, fully justified his nomination as the candidate for Vice-President; but when elected there was the usual steadily widening chasm between him and the Executive, and, like nearly or quite all Vice-Presidents, he drifted into the embrace of the opposition to his chief. It was this opposition, led by men of such consummate ability as Wade of Ohio and Henry Winter Davis of Maryland, that admonished Lincoln of the necessity of putting himself in the strongest possible attitude for the then admittedly doubtful battle of 1864. While the defeat of Lee at Gettysburg and the surrender of Vicksburg the year before had done much to inspire faith in the success of the war, the Confederacy was stubbornly maintaining its armies. The opening of the new year of 1864 called for large drafts of men to fill the thinned ranks of the Union forces, and there was a powerful undertow of despondency among the loyal people of the North. The war was costing \$3,000,000 a day, and after three years of bloody conflict the end was not in view. The Republican leaders in the early part of 1864 were divided in councils, distracted by the conflicts of ambition, and very many of the ablest of them regarded the defeat of the party as not only possible, but more than probable. The one man who fully understood the peril and who studied carefully how to avert it was Abraham Lincoln.

Lincoln, as was his usual custom, consulted with all who came within his reach, and developed his views from time to time with extreme caution. In the early part of the year he reached the conclusion that it would be eminently wise to nominate a conspicuous War Democrat for Vice-President along with himself for President. A number of prominent men who acted with the Democratic party in 1860 against

Lincoln's election, but who patriotically entered the military service and won distinction by their heroism, represented a very large class of Democratic voters upon whom Lincoln felt he must rely for his re-election. Hamlin had been a Democrat, but he did not come under the class of War Democrats, while Butler, Dix, Dickinson, Johnson, Holt, and others represented a distinctive and very formidable class of citizens who, while yet professing to be Democrats, were ready to support the war under Lincoln until it should be successfully terminated by the restoration of the Union. Lincoln's first selection for Vice-President was General Butler. I believe he reached that conclusion without specially consulting with any of his friends. As early as March, 1864, he sent for General Cameron, to whom he proposed the nomination of Butler, and that, I assume, was his first declaration of his purpose to any one on the subject. He confided to Cameron the mission to Fortress Monroe to confer confidentially with Butler. On that journey Cameron was accompanied by ex-Congressman William H. Armstrong of Pennsylvania, who was first informed of the real object of Cameron's visit when they were returning home, and after Butler had declined to permit his name to be considered. Butler was at that time a strong man in the loyal states. He had not achieved great military success, but his administration in New Orleans had made him universally popular throughout the North, in which the vindictive vituperation of the Southern people heaped upon him was an important factor. Butler's declination was peremptory, and Cameron returned home without learning in what direction Lincoln would be likely to look for a candidate for Vice-President.

In a later conference with Cameron, in which the names of Johnson, Dickinson, and Dix were seriously discussed, Lincoln expressed his preference for Johnson, to which Cameron, with unconcealed reluctance, finally assented. While Lincoln at that time decided in favor of Johnson, he did not himself regard it as final. His extreme caution and excep-

tional sagacity made him carefully consider all possible weak points in Johnson's candidacy before he launched the movement for his nomination. He summoned General Sickles to Washington, and sent him to Tennessee on a confidential mission to examine and make report to him of the success of Johnson's administration as military governor. That state was in a revolutionary condition; Johnson was charged with violent and despotic official acts, and Lincoln meant to know fully whether Johnson might, by reason of his administration, be vulnerable as a national candidate. Sickles had no knowledge of the real purpose of his mission. The question of nominating Johnson for the Vice-Presidency was never suggested or even intimated to Sickles, and he fulfilled his trust and reported favorably on Johnson's administration, without even a suspicion that he was to determine the destiny of Andrew Johnson, make him Vice-President of the United States, and thus President.

Lincoln's purpose in seeking Johnson as his associate on the national ticket in 1864 was much more far reaching than any but himself at the time supposed. He meant to guard against possible defeat by getting a number of the insurgent states in some sort of line to enable their Electoral votes to be counted if needed. His most promising experiment was in Tennessee under the guidance of Johnson, but he obviously intended that the states of Louisiana, Arkansas, and West Virginia with Tennessee should be organized with the semblance of full statehood to make their Electoral votes available should the national contest be close. Had he developed this policy to his party or to Congress, it would have been met with positive and aggressive opposition, but he developed it in the quietest way possible. His first movement in that line was to have delegations elected to the national convention from the Southern states named, and when they appeared at the Baltimore convention on the 7th of June the battle for their admission was led with consummate skill by the few who understood Lincoln's policy. Tennessee being in the

strongest attitude, the delegation from that state was selected on which to make the fight. It was desperately contested, because it was then well understood to mean the nomination of Johnson for Vice-President; but the Tennessee delegates were admitted by more than a two-thirds vote. With Tennessee accepted as entitled to representation, the contest was ended, and Louisiana and Arkansas were given the right of representation without a serious struggle.

When Congress met again after the election in November, and when Lincoln's election by an overwhelming popular as well as Electoral vote was assured, the question of counting the Electoral votes of Louisiana, Tennessee, and Arkansas was raised and elaborately discussed in both branches. As Lincoln had 212 Electoral votes to 21 for McClellan, exclusive of the votes of the three insurgent states referred to, there was no political necessity to induce Congress to strain a point for the acceptance of these votes; and a joint resolution was finally passed declaring "that no valid election for Electors of President and Vice-President of the United States" had been held in Louisiana, Tennessee, and Arkansas. Lincoln approved the resolution, but took occasion by special message to disclaim approval of the recital of the preamble. Had the votes of these three states been needed to elect a Republican President, I hazard little in saying that they would have been treated as regular and lawful and counted with the approval of both the Senate and House; as they were not needed and as the development of these states was Lincoln's own conception, those who were not specially friendly scored an empty victory against him.

He moved with masterly sagacity at every step in his efforts to nominate Johnson, and his selection of General Cameron as early as March to be his first ambassador in search of a War Democrat for Vice-President was not one of the least of his many shrewd conceptions. The relations between Lincoln and Cameron had been somewhat strained by Cameron's retirement from the Cabinet in 1862. At least Lincoln as-

sumed that they might be somewhat strained on the part of Cameron, and he took early caution to enlist Cameron in his renomination. He knew the power of Cameron in the manipulation of discordant political elements, and he fully appreciated the fact that Cameron's skill made him a dangerous opponent. He bound Cameron to himself by making him one of his trusted leaders in the selection of a candidate for Vice-President. The man who was probably closest to Lincoln in this movement was Henry J. Raymond, but in this as in all Lincoln's movements his confidence was limited with each of his trusted agents. Raymond was then editor of the only prominent New York journal that heartily supported Lincoln; and he, with the aid of Seward and Weed, who early entered into the movement for the nomination of Johnson, overthrew Dickinson in his own state and was the confessed Lincoln leader in the Baltimore convention of 1864. With Dickinson beaten in New York and with Hamlin's forces demoralized early in the contest, the nomination of Johnson was easily accomplished, chiefly because it was what Lincoln desired.

Neither Swett nor Lamon had any knowledge of Lincoln's positive movement for the nomination of Johnson until within a day or two of the meeting of the convention. Colonel Lamon has recently given a description of the scene between Lincoln, Swett, and himself a day or two before they went to Baltimore to aid in Lincoln's renomination. Swett earnestly and even passionately protested against the overthrow of Hamlin, but after hearing Lincoln fully on the subject he consented to go to the convention, in which he was a delegate from Illinois, and support the nomination of Johnson; but he wisely declared Holt to be his candidate, as a foil to protect Lincoln. Swett naturally felt uncertain as to how the suggestion of Johnson's name would be received at Baltimore, as he had no knowledge of the extent to which Lincoln had progressed in the Johnson movement. In answer to his inquiry whether he was at liberty to say that Lincoln desired

Johnson's nomination, Lincoln answered in the negative, and, as quoted by Colonel Lamon in a recent public letter, said: "No, I will address a letter to Lamon here embodying my views, which you, McClure, and other friends may use if it be found absolutely necessary; otherwise it may be better that I shall not appear actively on the stage of this theatre." The letter was written by Lincoln and delivered to Lamon, who had it with him at Baltimore, but, as there was no occasion for using it, it was never shown to any one and was returned to Lincoln after the convention at his request.

How shrewdly Lincoln moved, and with what extreme caution he guarded his confidence, is well illustrated by the fact that while he consulted Cameron confidentially about the nomination of Johnson some months before the convention, and consulted me on the same subject the day before the convention met, neither of us supposed that the other was acting in the special confidence of Lincoln. On the contrary, I supposed that Cameron was sincerely friendly to Hamlin and would battle for his renomination, until he finally proposed to me the night before the convention met that we give a solid complimentary vote to Hamlin, and follow it with a solid vote for Johnson. Another evidence of his extreme caution in politics is given by the fact that while he carefully concealed from both Cameron and myself the fact that the other was in his confidence in the same movement, he surprised me a few weeks before the convention by sending for me and requesting me to come to the convention as a delegate-at-large. I had already been unanimously chosen as a delegate from my own Congressional district, and was amazed, when I informed Lincoln of that fact, to find that he still insisted upon me going before the state convention and having myself elected as a delegate-at-large. To all my explanations that a man in the delegation was good for just what he was worth, whether he represented the district or the state, Lincoln persisted in the request that I should come as a delegate-at-large. When I finally pressed him for an explana-

tion of what seemed to me to be a needless request involving great embarrassment to me, he finally with evident reluctance answered: "General Cameron has assured me that he will be a delegate-at-large from your state, and while I have no reason to question his sincerity as my friend, if he is to be a delegate-at-large from Pennsylvania I would much prefer that you be one with him." Had he been willing to tell me the whole truth, he would have informed me that Cameron was enlisted in the Johnson movement, and that he specially desired at least two of the delegates-at-large, representing opposing factions, to be active supporters of Johnson's nomination. There could be no other reasonable explanation of his earnest request to me to accept the embarrassing position of seeking an election from the state convention when I was already an elected delegate from my district. A fortunate combination of circumstances made it possible for me to be elected without a serious contest, Cameron and I receiving nearly a unanimous vote.

Lincoln realized the fact that the chances were greatly against his re-election unless he should be saved by the success of the Union army. There was no period from January, 1864, until the 3d of September of the same year when McClellan would not have defeated Lincoln for President. The two speeches of that campaign which turned the tide and gave Lincoln his overwhelming victory were Sherman's dispatch from Atlanta on the 3d of September, saying: "Atlanta is ours and fairly won;" and Sheridan's dispatch of the 19th of September from the Valley, saying: "We have just sent them (the enemy) whirling through Winchester, and we are after them tomorrow." From the opening of the military campaign in the spring of 1864 until Sherman announced the capture of Atlanta, there was not a single important victory of the Union army to inspire the loyal people of the country with confidence in the success of the war. Grant's campaign from the Rapidan to the James was the bloodiest in the history of the struggle. He had lost as many men in

killed, wounded, and missing as Lee ever had in front of him, and there was no substantial victory in all the sacrifice made by the gallant Army of the Potomac. Sherman had been fighting continuously for four months without a decisive success. The people of the North had become heartsick at the fearful sacrifices which brought no visible achievement. Democratic sentiment had drifted to McClellan as the opposing candidate, and so profoundly was Lincoln impressed by the gloomy situation that confronted him that on the 23d of August, seven days before the nomination of McClellan and ten days before the capture of Atlanta, he wrote the following memoranda, sealed it in an envelope, and had it endorsed by several members of the Cabinet, including Secretary Welles, with written instructions that it was not to be opened until after the election:

EXECUTIVE MANSION,
WASHINGTON, August 23, 1864.

This morning, as for some days past, it seems exceedingly probable that this administration will not be re-elected. Then it will be my duty to co-operate with the President-elect so as to save the Union between the election and the inauguration, as he will have secured his election on such grounds that he cannot possibly save it afterward.

A. LINCOLN.

Nor was Lincoln alone in his apprehension of defeat. Distrust and disintegration were common throughout the entire Republican organization, and nearly all of the sincere supporters of Lincoln were in next to utter despair of political success. I spent an hour with him in the Executive Chamber some ten days before he wrote the memoranda before given, and I never saw him more dejected in my life. His face, always sad in repose, was then saddened until it became a picture of despair, and he spoke of the want of sincere and earnest support from the Republican leaders with unusual freedom. I distinctly remember his reference to the fact that of all the Republican members of the House he could name but one in whose personal and political friendship he could

absolutely confide. That one man was Isaac N. Arnold of Illinois. Stevens, the Great Commoner of the war, while sincerely desiring Lincoln's re-election because he hated McClellan worse than he hated Lincoln, and because he felt that the election of Lincoln was necessary to the safety of the Union, was intensely bitter against Lincoln personally, and rarely missed an opportunity to thrust his keenest invectives upon him. New York had a Democratic governor of matchless ability, and that great state was regarded as almost hopelessly lost. Pennsylvania was trembling in the balance, as was confirmed by the failure of the Republicans to carry the state at the October election, and Indiana would have been almost in rebellion but for the victories of Sherman and Sheridan during the month of September.

At this interview Lincoln seemed to have but one overmastering desire, and that was to attain peace on the basis of a restored Union. He took from a corner of his desk a paper written out in his own handwriting, proposing to pay to the South \$400,000,000 as compensation for their slaves, on condition that the states should return to their allegiance to the government and accept Emancipation. I shall never forget the emotion exhibited by Lincoln when, after reading this paper to me, he said: "If I could only get this proposition before the Southern people, I believe they would accept it, and I have faith that the Northern people, however startled at first, would soon appreciate the wisdom of such a settlement of the war. One hundred days of war would cost us the \$400,000,000 I would propose to give for Emancipation and a restored Republic, not to speak of the priceless sacrifice of life and the additional sacrifice of property; but were I to make this offer now it would defeat me inevitably and probably defeat Emancipation." I had seen him many times when army disasters shadowed the land and oppressed him with sorrow, but I never saw him so profoundly moved by grief as he was on that day, when there seemed to be not even a silvery lining to the political cloud that hung over him. Few now recall the

grave perils to Lincoln's re-election which thickened almost at every turn in 1864 until the country was electrified by Sherman's inspiring dispatch from Atlanta, followed by Sheridan's brilliant victories in the Valley and Sherman's memorable march to the sea; and it was these grave perils and these supreme necessities, long understood by Lincoln, which made him, in his broad and sagacious way, carefully view the field for the strongest candidate for Vice-President, and finally led him to nominate Andrew Johnson. To Lincoln, and to Lincoln alone, Johnson owed his nomination.

I had no personal knowledge of Lincoln's purpose to nominate Johnson for Vice-President until the day before the Baltimore convention met. He telegraphed me to visit Washington before attending the convention, and I did so. He opened the conversation by advising me to give my vote and active support to Johnson as his associate on the ticket. It was evident that he confidently relied on my willingness to accept his judgment in the matter. I had expected to support the renomination of Hamlin. I had little respect for Andrew Johnson, and of all the men named for the position he was the last I would have chosen if I had been left to the exercise of my own judgment. It is more than probable that I would have obeyed the wishes of Lincoln even if he had not presented the very strong and, indeed, conclusive reasons for his request; but after hearing the arguments which had led him to the conclusion that Johnson should be nominated as his associate, I was quite as ready to accept the wisdom of the proposition as to obey the wishes of the President.

There was not a trace of bitterness, prejudice, or even unfriendliness toward Hamlin in all that Lincoln said about the Vice-Presidency, and he was careful to say that he did not desire the nomination of Johnson to gratify any personal preference of his own. He naturally preferred a new man, as Hamlin was not in sympathy with Lincoln personally or with the general policy of his administration, but he preferred Johnson for two reasons, which he presented with unanswer-

able clearness: First, he was the most conspicuous, most aggressive, and the most able of all the War Democrats of that time, and was just in the position to command the largest measure of sympathy and support from that very important political element. Dix, Dickinson, Butler, and Holt had made no such impressive exhibition of their loyalty as had Johnson in Tennessee. He was then just in the midst of his great work of rehabilitating his rebellious state and restoring it to the Union, and his loyal achievements were therefore fresh before the people and certain to continue so during the campaign. There was really no answer to Lincoln's argument on this point. Second, the stronger and more imperative reason for Lincoln preferring Johnson was one that I had not appreciated fully until he had presented it. The great peril of the Union at that day was the recognition of the Confederacy by England and France, and every month's delay of the overthrow of the rebellious armies increased the danger. Extraordinary efforts had been made by Lincoln to stimulate the Union sentiment, especially in England, but with only moderate success, and there was no safety from one day to another against a war with England and France that would have been fatal to the success of the Union cause. The only possible way to hinder recognition was to show successful results of the war in restoring the dissevered states to their old allegiance, and Lincoln was firmly convinced that by no other method could the Union sentiment abroad be so greatly inspired and strengthened as by the nomination and election of a representative Southern man to the Vice-Presidency from one of the rebellious states in the very heart of the Confederacy. These reasons decided Lincoln to prefer Johnson for Vice-President, and Lincoln possessed both the power to make the nomination and the wisdom to dictate it without jarring the party organization.

The fact that Lincoln did not make known to Hamlin and his friends his purpose to nominate another for Vice-President in 1864 does not accuse him of deceit or insincerity; and the

additional fact that when the convention was in session and he was asked for a categorical answer as to his position on the Vice-Presidency, he declined to express his wishes or to avow his interference with the action of the party, cannot be justly construed into political double-dealing. It was quite as much a necessity for Lincoln to conceal his movements for the nomination of Johnson as it was, in his judgment, a necessity for him to nominate a Southern man and a War Democrat, and he simply acted with rare sagacity and discretion in his movements and with fidelity to the country, the safety of which was paramount with him. Hamlin was profoundly grieved over his defeat, as were his many friends, and had they seen the hand of Lincoln in it they would have resented it with bitterness; but Hamlin himself was not fully convinced of Lincoln's opposition to his renomination until within two years of his death. I have in my possession an autograph letter from Hamlin to Judge Pettis of Pennsylvania, to whom Lincoln had expressed his desire for Johnson's nomination on the morning of the day the convention met, in which he says that he had seen and heard statements relating to Lincoln's action in the matter, but he did not believe them until the evidence had lately been made conclusive to his mind. In this letter he says: "I was really sorry to be disabused." And he adds: "Mr. L. [Lincoln] evidently became some alarmed about his re-election, and changed his position. That is all I care to say." I have thus the conclusive evidence from Hamlin himself, that in September, 1889, he had full knowledge of Lincoln's direct intervention to nominate Johnson for Vice-President in 1864. Hamlin gave an earnest support to the ticket, believing that the supreme sentiment of Republicanism had set him aside in the interest of the public welfare. He maintained his high position in the party for many years thereafter, filling the office of Collector of Portland and subsequently returning to the Senate, where he served until he had passed the patriarchal age, and then voluntarily retired to enjoy the calm evening of a well-spent life.

CHAPTER TEN

LINCOLN AND CHASE

SALMON P. CHASE was the most irritating fly in the Lincoln ointment from the inauguration of the new administration in 1861 until the 29th of June, 1864, when his resignation as Secretary of the Treasury was finally accepted. He was an annual resigner in the Cabinet, having petulantly tendered his resignation in 1862, again in 1863, and again in 1864, when he was probably surprised by Lincoln's acceptance of it. It was soon after Lincoln's unanimous renomination, and when Chase's dream of succeeding Lincoln as President had perished, at least for the time. He was one of the strongest intellectual forces of the entire administration, but in politics he was a theorist and a dreamer and was unbalanced by overmastering ambition. He never forgave Lincoln for the crime of having been preferred for President over him, and while he was a pure and conscientious man, his prejudices and disappointments were vastly stronger than himself, and there never was a day during his continuance in the Cabinet when he was able to approach justice to Lincoln. Like Sumner, he entered public life ten years before the war by election to the Senate through a combination of Democrats and Free-Soilers, and it is worthy of note that these two most brilliant and tireless of the great anti-slavery leaders cast their last votes for Democratic candidates for President.

From the day that Chase entered the Cabinet he seems to have been consumed with the idea that he must be Lincoln's successor in 1864, and to that end he systematically directed

his efforts, and often sought, by flagrant abuse of the power of his department, to weaken his chief. He will stand in history as the great financier of the war; as the man who was able to maintain the national credit in the midst of rebellion and disruption, and who gave the country the best banking system the world has ever known. In that one duty he was practical and amenable to wholesome counsel, and his unblemished personal and official integrity gave great weight to his policy as Secretary of the Treasury. With all the vexation he gave Lincoln, and with the many reasons he gave his chief to regard him as perfidious, Lincoln never ceased to appreciate his value as a Cabinet officer. In 1863, when Chase had become an open candidate for the Presidency, and when many of his political movements were personally offensive to the President, Lincoln said of Chase: "I have determined to shut my eyes so far as possible to everything of the sort. Mr. Chase makes a good Secretary, and I shall keep him where he is. If he becomes President, all right. I hope we may never have a worse man. I have observed with regret his plan of strengthening himself." This expression from Lincoln conveys a very mild idea of his real feelings on the subject: In point of fact, Lincoln was not only profoundly grieved at Chase's candidacy, but he was constantly irritated at the methods Chase employed to promote his nomination.

I never saw Lincoln unbalanced except during the fall of 1863, when Chase was making his most earnest efforts to win the Republican nomination. The very widespread distrust toward Lincoln cherished by Republican leaders gave him good reason to apprehend the success of a combination to defeat him. Scores of national leaders were at that time disaffected, but when they were compelled to face the issue of his renomination or Republican defeat, they finally yielded with more or less ill grace, and supported him. Lincoln saw that if the disaffected elements of the party should be combined on one strong candidate, his own success would be greatly endangered. It was the only subject on which I ever

knew Lincoln to lose his head. I saw him many times during the summer and fall of 1863, when the Chase boom was at its height, and he seemed like one who had got into water far beyond his depth. I happened at the White House one night when he was most concerned about the Chase movement, and he detained me until two o'clock in the morning. Occasionally he would speak with great seriousness, and evidently felt very keenly the possibility of his defeat, while at other times his face would suddenly brighten up with his never-ending store of humor, and he would illustrate Chase's attitude by some pertinent story, at which he would laugh immoderately. After reviewing the situation for an hour, during which I assured him that Chase could not be the Republican candidate, whoever might be, and that I regarded his renomination as reasonably certain, I rose at midnight, shook hands with him, and started to go. He followed me to the end of the Cabinet table nearest his desk, swung one of his long legs over the corner of it, and stopped me to present some new phase of the Chase battle that had just occurred to him. After he had gotten through with that I again bade him good-night and started to the door. He followed to the other end of the Cabinet table, again swung his leg over the corner of it, and started in afresh to discuss the contest between Chase and himself.

It was nearly one o'clock when I again bade Lincoln good-night, and got as far as the door, but when just about to open it he called me and with the merriest twinkling of his eye, he said: "By the way, McClure, how would it do if I were to decline Chase?" I was surprised of course at the novel suggestion, and said to him, "Why, Mr. Lincoln, how could that be done?" He answered, "Well, I don't know exactly how it might be done, but that reminds me of a story of two Democratic candidates for Senator in Egypt, Illinois, in its early political times. That section of Illinois was almost solidly Democratic, as you know, and nobody but Democrats were candidates for office. Two Democratic candidates for Senator

met each other in joint debate from day to day, and gradually became more and more exasperated at each other, until their discussions were simply disgraceful wrangles, and they both became ashamed of them. They finally agreed that either should say anything he pleased about the other and it should not be resented as an offense, and from that time on the campaign progressed without any special display of ill temper. On election night the two candidates, who lived in the same town, were receiving their returns together, and the contest was uncomfortably close. A distant precinct, in which one of the candidates confidently expected a large majority, was finally reported with a majority against him. The disappointed candidate expressed great surprise, to which the other candidate answered that he should not be surprised, as he had taken the liberty of declining him in that district the evening before the election. He reminded the defeated candidate that he had agreed that either was free to say anything about the other without offense, and added that under that authority he had gone up into that district and taken the liberty of saying that his opponent had retired from the contest, and therefore the vote of the district was changed, and the declined candidate was thus defeated. I think," added Lincoln, with one of his heartiest laughs, "I had better decline Chase." It was evident that the question of inducing Chase to decline was very seriously considered by Lincoln. He did not seem to know just how it could be done, but it was obvious that he believed it might be done in one way or another, and what he said in jest he meant in sober earnest.

Lincoln's anxiety for a renomination was the one thing ever uppermost in his mind during the third year of his administration, and, like all men in the struggles of ambition, he believed that his only motive in his desire for his own re-election was to save the country, rather than to achieve success for himself. That he was profoundly sincere and patriotic in his purpose and efforts to save the Union, and that he would willingly have given his life as a sacrifice had

it been necessary to accomplish that result, none can doubt who knew him; but he was only human, after all, and his ambition was like the ambition of other good men, often stronger than himself. In this as in all political or administrative movements Lincoln played the waiting game. When he did not know what to do, he was the safest man in the world to trust to do nothing. He carefully veiled his keen and sometimes bitter resentment against Chase, and waited the fullness of time when he could by some fortuitous circumstance remove Chase as a competitor, or by some shrewd manipulation of politics make him a hopeless one. His inexperience in the details of politics made him naturally distrustful and apprehensive as to his renomination. He could not, at that early day, get together the political forces necessary to make him feel safe in the battle, and it was not until about the close of 1863 or early in 1864 that he finally formulated in his mind his political policy, and began the work of consolidating his forces for action. He did this with a degree of sagacity and method that would have done credit to the ripest politician of the age, but there was no time until the Baltimore convention met that Lincoln felt secure. Even after an overwhelming majority of the delegates had been instructed in his favor, and when to all but himself it was evident that there could be no effective opposition to him in the convention, he was never entirely free from doubts as to the result. Within a month of his nomination, and when his more violent enemies had abandoned the effort to defeat him, as was evidenced by the Fremont Convention called at Cleveland, he was yet perplexed with anxiety over the possibility of his defeat. In discussing the question as late as May, 1864, I was surprised to find the apprehensions he cherished. I told him that his nomination was a foregone conclusion, and that it was not possible for any combination to be made that could endanger his success. I presented the attitude of the various states, and referred to their delegations to prove to him that his nomination must be made on the first ballot by a two-

thirds vote, if not with absolute unity. To this he responded: "Well, McClure, what you say seems to be unanswerable, but I don't quite forget that I was nominated for President in a convention that was two-thirds for the other fellow."

It is needless to say that the official and personal relations between Chase and Lincoln during the later part of the year 1863 and the early part of 1864 were severely strained. Lincoln felt it deeply, but said little to any one on the subject, and never permitted Chase to know how keenly he grieved him. He knew that Chase sincerely desired to be honest in the performance of his public duty, and he judged his infirmities with generous charity. He fully appreciated the fact, so well stated by Chase's biographer, Judge Warden, that Chase "was indeed sought less by strong men and by good men than by weak men and by bad men." Indeed, Chase, with all his towering intellect and all his admitted devotion to the country's cause, was the merest plaything of the political charlatans who crossed his path, and he was thus made to do many things which were unworthy of him, and which, with any other than Lincoln to judge him, would have brought him to absolute disgrace. He wrote many letters to his friends in different parts of the country habitually complaining of Lincoln's incompetency and of the hopeless condition of the war. In none of the many letters which have reached the light did he give Lincoln credit for capacity or fitness for his responsible trust. In disposing of the patronage of his department he was often fretful and generally ill-advised.

With all these infirmities of temper and of ambition, Lincoln bore with Chase with marvelous patience until after Lincoln's unanimous renomination in 1864, when Chase sent his third resignation to the President. In his letter of resignation he said: "My position here is not altogether agreeable to you, and it is certainly too full of embarrassment and difficulty and painful responsibility to allow in me the least desire to retain it." For the first time Lincoln recognized the

fact that he and Chase could not get along together, and he promptly answered Chase's letter of resignation in the following terse but expressive note: "Your resignation of the office of Secretary of the Treasury, sent me yesterday, is accepted. Of all I have said in commendation of your ability and fidelity I have nothing to unsay, and yet you and I have reached a point of mutual embarrassment in our official relation which it seems cannot be overcome or long sustained consistently with the public service." Like all irritable men who are the prey of infirmities, Chase believed, and recorded in his diary, that the embarrassments which arose between him and Lincoln were not of his creation. He thus expresses it in his own language: "I had found a good deal of embarrassment from him, but what he had found from me I cannot imagine, unless it has been caused by my unwillingness to have offices distributed as spoils or benefits." Chase retired from the Cabinet believing that he had severed all political relations with Lincoln for the remainder of his life, and the last thing that he then could have dreamed of was that his name would ever be considered by the President for the office of Chief Justice of the United States.

When Chase retired from the Cabinet, in the latter part of June, he did not expect to support Lincoln for re-election. Within a week thereafter he recorded in his diary the fact that Senator Pomeroy could not support Lincoln, and he added: "I am much of the same sentiment, though not willing now to decide what duty may demand next fall." But he then hoped much from the revolutionary attitude of the supporters of Fremont and the bold assault made upon Lincoln by Senator Wade and Representative Henry Winter Davis. Chase retired to the White Mountains to await events, and it soon became evident that the revolt against Lincoln would not materialize. On the contrary, every week brought wayward stragglers into the Lincoln camp, until at last Fremont himself had to surrender the side-show nomination he had accepted and fall into line in support of the administration, and

the manifesto of Wade and Davis had fallen upon listless ears. It soon became evident that the sulking Republican leaders must choose between Lincoln and McClellan—between supporting the war and opposing the war, for the McClellan platform distinctly declared the war a failure and demanded the restoration of the Union by some other method than an appeal to arms. When Chase returned from his rest in the mountains in the latter part of September, he visited Washington, and of course paid his respects to the President. It is evident from Chase's own report of his interview with Lincoln that he was not greatly inspired by Lincoln's professions of devotion. He notes the fact that Lincoln was "not at all demonstrative, either in speech or manner," and he adds, "I feel that I do not know him." It is evident that Chase returned to Washington with the view of getting into some sort of friendly relations with the President. He twice visited Lincoln during his short stay in Washington, and within a week thereafter he publicly declared himself in favor of Lincoln's election at his home in Ohio. He voted the Republican state ticket in October, and sent a congratulatory telegram to Lincoln on the result of the election.

It was known to all about Washington during the fall of 1864 that Chief Justice Taney could not long survive, and after the first of September he was likely to die any day. It would be unjust to Chase to say that he was influenced in his political action by the hope of succeeding Chief Justice Taney, but the fact that his name was pressed upon Lincoln simultaneously by his friends throughout the country, even before the dead Chief Justice had been consigned to the tomb, proves that Chase had cherished the hope of reaching that exalted judicial position. Taney died on the 12th of October, 1864, within two weeks after Chase declared himself in favor of the election of Lincoln, and on the 13th of October Chase's name was on the lips of all his friends as the man for Chief Justice. The movement was dignified by the active and earnest efforts of Senator Sumner, who was in a position

to exert considerable influence with the President, although on many questions they had seriously differed. He desired a Chief Justice who could be trusted on the slavery question, and, believing that Chase was the safest of all on that important issue, he made an exhaustive struggle to win the position for Chase. Secretary Stanton, who had been in general harmony with Chase in the Cabinet, was also his earnest friend in the struggle for the Chief Justiceship, but the opposition aroused at the mention of his name came from every part of the country, and from very many of the ablest and most earnest of Lincoln's friends. It was argued against Chase that while his ability was admitted, his practical knowledge of law was limited, and that he was without legal training, because his life had been devoted almost exclusively to politics. He was elected to the Senate a dozen years before the war; he retired from the Senate to become Governor of Ohio, in which position he served two terms, and he was re-elected to the Senate at the close of his gubernatorial service. He gave up the Senatorship to enter the Cabinet in 1861, so that for many years he had given no thought or efforts to the law, and he was regarded by very many as lacking in the special training necessary to the first judicial office of the national government.

Strong as was the hostility to Chase's appointment in every section of the Union, the most intense opposition came from his own state of Ohio. The suggestion that he should become Chief Justice was resented by a large majority of the leading Republicans of the state, and they severely tested Lincoln's philosophy by the violence of their opposition, and especially by the earnestness with which they insisted that it was an insult to Lincoln himself to ask him to appoint Chase. Pennsylvania's most prominent official connected with the administration, and one of her most learned lawyers, Joseph J. Lewis, then Commissioner of Internal Revenue, reflected the general Republican sentiment of Pennsylvania by his unusual proceeding of sending a formal protest to Lincoln

against Chase's appointment. He declared that Chase "was not a man of much legal or financial knowledge; that his selfishness had gradually narrowed and contracted his views of things in general; that he was amazingly ignorant of men; that it was the opinion in the department that he really desired, toward the end of his term of office, to injure, and as far as possible to destroy, the influence and popularity of the administration."

I have, in a previous chapter, related an interview I had with Lincoln a short time before he appointed Chase. It was very evident from Lincoln's manner, rather than from what he said, that he was much perplexed as to his duty in the selection of a Chief Justice. In that conversation he discussed the merits of the half dozen or more prominent men who were suggested for the place. It is hardly proper to say that Lincoln discussed the matter, for the conversation was little else on his part than a succession of searching inquiries to obtain the fullest expression of my views as to the merits and demerits of the men he seemed to have under consideration. As to his own views he was studiously reticent. I tried in various ways to obtain some idea of the leaning of his mind on the subject, but did not succeed. The many inquiries he made about Stanton, and the earnestness he exhibited in discussing, or rather having me discuss, Stanton as the possible Chief Justice, impressed me with the belief that he was entertaining the idea of appointing his Secretary of War; but he gave no expression that could have warranted me in assuming that I could correctly judge the bent of his mind on the subject. The fact that he delayed the appointment for nearly two months after the death of Taney proves that Lincoln gave the subject not only very serious but protracted consideration, and I doubt whether he had fully decided in his own mind whom he would appoint until the 6th of December, the day that he sent the name of Chase to the Senate for Chief Justice.

At no time during Lincoln's administration had he ever submitted to an equal pressure in deciding any public ap-

pointment, and, excepting the Emancipation Proclamation, I doubt whether any question of policy was ever so earnestly pressed and opposed by his friends as was the appointment of Chase. Any other President than Lincoln would not have appointed Chase. His personal affronts to Lincoln had been continuous and flagrant from the time he entered the Cabinet until he resigned from it a little more than three years thereafter, and I am quite sure that at no time during that period did Lincoln ever appeal to Chase for advice as his friend. He had many consultations with him, of course, on matters relating to the government, but that Lincoln regarded Chase as his bitter and even malignant enemy during all that period cannot now be doubted. The only pretense of atonement that Chase had ever made was his hesitating and ungracious support of Lincoln's re-election, but only after the brilliant success of the Union armies under Sherman and Sheridan had absolutely settled the contest in Lincoln's favor. Grant overlooked a malignant assault made upon him by Admiral Porter when he promoted him to succeed Farragut; but in that case Porter's record clearly entitled him to the distinction, and Grant simply yielded personal resentment to a public duty. It was not pretended that Chase had any claim to the Chief Justiceship on the ground of eminent legal attainments or of political fidelity, and Lincoln's appointment of Chase was simply one of the many exhibitions of the matchless magnanimity that was one of the greatest attributes of his character. He appointed him not because he desired Chase for Chief Justice so much as because he feared that, in refusing to appoint him, he might permit personal prejudice to do injustice to the nation.*

Of course, Chase promptly and effusively thanked the President when he learned that his name had been sent to

* You give a wrong impression as to Chase's legal training. He was a thorough student of the law, and a careful, painstaking lawyer till he entered the Senate at the age of forty-two.—*Edward L. Pierce to the Author*, December 7, 1891.

the Senate for Chief Justice. In his letter to Lincoln he said: "Before I sleep I must thank you for this mark of your confidence, and especially for the manner in which the nomination was made." But before he was three months in the high office conferred upon him by Lincoln he became one of Lincoln's most obtrusive and petulant critics, and his last letter to Lincoln, written on the very day of Lincoln's assassination, was a harsh criticism on the President's action in the Louisiana case. Immediately after the death of Lincoln, writing to an old political associate in Ohio, Chase said: "The schemes of politicians will now adjust themselves to the new conditions; I want no part in them." Indeed, the only specially kind words from Chase to Lincoln that I have been able to discover in all the publications giving Chase's views I find in the one expression of hearty gratitude and friendship, written on the impulse of the moment, when he was first notified of his nomination to the Chief Justiceship. The new conditions of which he spoke after the death of Lincoln, and in which he declared he could have no part, speedily controlled the new Chief Justice in his political actions. The leader of the radical Republicans when he became Chief Justice, he gradually gravitated against his party until he was ready to accept the Democratic nomination for President in 1868, and he never thereafter supported a Republican candidate for President. He hoped to receive the Presidential nomination from the New York convention of 1868. It had been agreed upon by some who believed that they controlled the convention that Chase should be nominated, and Governor Seymour retired from the chair at the appointed time, as is generally believed, to make the nomination to the convention; but Samuel J. Tilden had no love for Chase, and it was he who inspired the spontaneous movement that forced the nomination of Seymour while he was out of the chair, and carried it like a whirlwind. Tilden did not guide the convention to the nomination of Seymour because he specially desired Seymour's nomination; he did it because he desired to defeat the nomination of

Chase. The result was the keenest disappointment to the Chief Justice. He defined his political position during the contest of 1868 as follows: "The action of the two parties has obliged me to resume, with my old faith, my old position—that of Democrat; by the grace of God free and independent."

After 1868, Chase was unknown as a factor in politics. In June, 1870, he was attacked by paralysis, and from that time until his death, on the 7th of May, 1873, he was a hopeless invalid. His last political deliverance was a feeble declaration in favor of Greeley's election in 1872, when he was shattered in mind and body. It may truthfully be said of him that from 1861 until his death his public life was one continued and consuming disappointment, and the constant training of his mind to politics doubtless greatly hindered him in winning the distinction as Chief Justice that he might have achieved had he given up political ambition and devoted himself to the high judicial duties he had accepted. While one of the greatest intellects among all the Republican leaders, he was an absolute failure as a politician, and his persistence in political effort made him fail to improve other opportunities. His life may be summed up in the single sentence: He was an eminently great, a strangely unbalanced, and a sadly disappointed man.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

LINCOLN AND CAMERON

ABRAHAM LINCOLN had more varied and complicated relations with Simon Cameron than with any other Pennsylvanian during his Presidential term. Indeed, Cameron fills more pages in the annals of Pennsylvania politics than any citizen of the state since the organization of our government. He is the only man who was four times elected to the United States Senate by the Pennsylvania Legislature until his son attained the same distinction as his successor, and he would have won a fifth election without a serious contest had he not voluntarily resigned to assure the succession to his son. Without great popular following, he was the most conspicuous of all our Pennsylvania politicians, measured by the single standard of success in obtaining political honors and power. He was first elected to the Senate in 1845 to succeed Buchanan, who had been transferred to the Polk Cabinet. The tariff of 1842 was then a vital issue in Pennsylvania, and Cameron was known as a positive protectionist. The Legislature was Democratic, and had nominated the late Chief Justice Woodward with apparent unanimity to succeed Buchanan; but Cameron organized a bolt from the Democratic party, commanded the solid Whig vote on the tariff issue, and was thus elected. The Senate to which he was chosen was Democratic, and he exhibited his peculiar power over that body when he served in it by the rejection of Judge Woodward when nominated by President Polk as Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States. He made a memo-

able record during his early senatorial service by his earnest appeal to Vice-President Dallas in favor of protection, when it was known that the repeal of the tariff of 1842 would depend upon the casting vote of the Vice-President. At the expiration of his term, in 1849, Cameron was a candidate for re-election. The balance of power in the Legislature was held by Native American Representatives from Philadelphia, elected on the Fusion ticket. He failed, however, to divert that element from the Whigs, and abandoned the struggle, giving the field to James Cooper, the regular Whig candidate, who was successful.

In 1854 a strange political revolution occurred in Pennsylvania, in which the new American or Know-Nothing party elected the Whig candidate for governor and the Democratic candidate for Canal Commissioner, and carried an overwhelming majority of the Legislature, embracing nominees of both parties. Cameron supported the Democratic ticket, and made a speech in its favor the night before election, but immediately after the election he associated himself with the Americans and became an aggressive candidate for United States Senator. This was the beginning of the factional conflict between Cameron and Curtin (then Secretary of the Commonwealth) that continued as long as they were in active political life. The new party was without leadership or discipline, and was speedily broken into fragments by a dozen aspirants for the Senatorship, of whom Cameron and Curtin were the leading and apparently only hopeful candidates. The struggle became exceptionally bitter, the joint convention meeting and adjourning from time to time without succeeding in a choice, until finally it became a matter of necessity to elect Cameron or adjourn without an election; and after a protracted contest over that issue the joint convention adjourned *sine die* by one majority. The next Legislature was Democratic, and Governor Bigler was chosen. When the Legislature met in 1857 the Democrats had three majority on joint ballot, and confidently expected to elect a Senator. The

late Colonel Forney was made the candidate by the direct intervention of President-elect Buchanan, who was then just on the threshold of the enormous power and patronage of the Presidency. The nomination would naturally have gone to Henry D. Foster, who was a member of the House, but for the attitude assumed by Buchanan. Forney's nomination somewhat weakened the Democratic lines by the general and clamorous discontent of the several candidates who had hoped to win in an open contest. The Republicans were intensely embittered against Forney because they believed that he, as chairman of the Democratic State Committee, had controlled the October election unfairly to defeat the Republican state ticket by a small majority, and thus assured the election of a Democratic president. Cameron had for the first time taken open ground against the Democrats in 1856, when he was one of the Republican candidates for elector at large, and actively supported Fremont's election. But he was not in personal favor with most of the Republicans, and when his name was proposed in the Republican caucus as a candidate for senator, it was not seriously entertained until Senator Penrose assured the caucus that Cameron could command three Democratic votes if given the solid support of the Republicans. A confidential committee was appointed to ascertain the truth of the statement by personal assurance from the Democratic members, and after a confirmative report, in which the names of the Democratic members were not given, the Republican caucus resolved to cast one vote for Cameron. That resolution was carried out in joint convention, and three Democratic Representatives (Lebo, Maneer, and Wagon-seller) voted for Cameron and elected him.

Cameron was a senator when Lincoln served his single term in Congress, but they did not become even acquaintances, and he first became involved in Lincoln's political life in 1860, when both were candidates for the Republican nomination for President. Cameron's candidacy was not regarded as a serious effort to nominate him, but the peculiar political

situation in Pennsylvania greatly favored him in making himself the candidate of the state, and with his sagacity and energy in political affairs he was not slow to avail himself of it. Curtin was the prominent candidate for Governor, and Cameron led Curtin's opponents. Curtin commanded the nomination for Governor, and naturally enough desired a united party to assure his election. Cameron secured a majority of votes in the state convention for President, and reasonably claimed that he was as much entitled to the united support of the party for President as Curtin was entitled to it for governor. The conflict between the two elements of the party led to a compromise, by which a nearly united delegation was given to Cameron for a complimentary vote for President. Cameron himself believed, in after years, that he could have been nominated and elected if he had been heartily pressed by Pennsylvania. He many times chided me for refusing to give him an earnest support, saying that he could have been made a successful candidate, and then, to use his own expressive language, "We could all have had everything we wanted." While Cameron had a majority of the delegation, a large minority was more or less bitterly opposed to him, and his name was withdrawn in the convention after the first ballot, because the delegation would have broken. The men who immediately represented Cameron on that occasion were John P. Sanderson, who was subsequently appointed to the regular army, and Alexander Cummings, whose confused use of military authority conferred upon him in the early part of the war led to a vote of censure upon Cameron by Congress. They knew before the convention met that the contest was narrowed down to Seward and Lincoln, and that Cameron, Chase, and Bates were not in the fight. Sanderson and Cummings, with little or no control of the delegation, were early in negotiation with David Davis, who was specially in charge of Lincoln's interest in Chicago, and obtained Davis's positive assurance that if the Pennsylvania delegation would support Lincoln and Lincoln succeeded to

the Presidency, Cameron would be appointed Secretary of the Treasury. This agreement was not made known at the time to any in the delegation, nor did it become known to Lincoln, at least as a positive obligation, until after the election.

The success of Lincoln at the November election left the political situation in Pennsylvania without change, except that the war of factions was intensified. Curtin did not give even a perfunctory support to Cameron for the Presidency, and Cameron gave about the same sort of support to Curtin for governor; and when it was announced, about the 1st of January, 1861, that Cameron had been to Springfield and had returned with the proffer of a Cabinet portfolio, it immediately inspired the most aggressive opposition to his appointment. I was not in sympathy with Cameron, and promptly telegraphed Lincoln, protesting against his appointment, to which Lincoln answered urging me to come immediately to Springfield. When I met Lincoln he frankly informed me that on the last day of December he had given Cameron a letter tendering to him a position in the Cabinet, reserving the right to decide whether it should be that of Secretary of the Treasury or Secretary of War. I explained to the President, with all the ardor of an intense partisan in the factional feud, that the appointment of Cameron would be a misfortune to the party in Pennsylvania, and a misfortune to the President that he must soon realize after his inauguration. It is needless now to review the causes which led to this active and embittered hostility of the friends of Curtin to Cameron's political advancement. It is sufficient to say that there was persistent war between these elements, and the usual political demoralization that ever attends such conflicts was painfully visible from the factional battles of that time. I saw that Lincoln was very much distressed at the situation in which he had become involved, and he discussed every phase of it with unusual frankness and obviously with profound feeling. I did not then know that Lincoln had been pledged,

without his knowledge, by his friends at Chicago to the appointment of Cameron, nor did Lincoln intimate it to me during our conversation. After an hour or more of discussion on the subject Lincoln dismissed it by saying that he would advise me further within a very few days.

I left Lincoln conscious that I had seriously impressed him with my views, but entirely unable to form any judgment as to what might be his ultimate action. Although I left him as late as eleven o'clock in the evening, he wrote Cameron a private letter dated the same night, beginning with this sentence: "Since seeing you, things have developed which make it impossible for me to take you into the Cabinet." He added: "You will say this comes from an interview with McClure, and this is partly but not wholly true; the more potent matter is wholly outside of Pennsylvania, yet I am not at liberty to specify. Enough that it appears to me to be sufficient." He followed with the suggestion that Cameron should write him declining the appointment, stating that if the declination was forwarded he would "not object to its being known that it was tendered" to him. He concluded by saying: "No person living knows, or has an intimation, that I write this letter," and with a postscript asking Cameron to telegraph the words "All right." Lincoln also wrote me a letter of a single sentence, dated the same night, asking that the accusations against Cameron should be put in tangible shape for his consideration. I am unable to quote literally any of the correspondence with Lincoln on this subject, as all of my many letters received from him, and the correspondence relating to the campaign and the organization of the administration, that I had preserved, were destroyed when Chambersburg was burned by McCausland in 1864. I answered Lincoln's very indefinite note by declining to appear as an individual prosecutor of Cameron, and his request for the formulation of Cameron's alleged political and personal delinquencies was not complied with.

Lincoln's letter to Cameron tendering him the Cabinet

appointment had been shown to some confidential friends whose enthusiasm outstripped their discretion, and they made public the fact that Cameron was an assured member of the new Cabinet. The second letter from Lincoln to Cameron, recalling the tender of a Cabinet office, was not made public, and doubtless was never seen beyond a very small and trusted circle of Cameron's associates; but it soon became known that Lincoln regarded the question as unsettled, and that led to exhaustive efforts on both sides to hinder and promote Cameron's appointment. Sanderson, who had made the compact at Chicago with Davis for Cameron's appointment, was sent at once to Springfield to enforce its fulfillment. He reasonably complained that Lincoln's letter to Cameron revoking the appointment was offensively blunt and needed explanation, as it gave no reason whatever for the sudden change in his judgment. While Sanderson and other prominent Pennsylvanians who visited Lincoln about the same time failed to obtain from him any assurance of his purpose to appoint Cameron, Lincoln was prevailed upon on the 13th of January, ten days after he had written the letter revoking the appointment, to write a confidential letter to Cameron apologizing for the unguarded terms in which he had expressed himself, and giving the assurance that he "intended no offense." He also enclosed to Cameron a new letter, antedated January 3, which he suggested that Cameron should accept as the original of that date, and destroy or return the one that had given offense. In this letter he said: "You have not as yet signified to me whether you would accept the appointment, and with much pain I now say to you that you will relieve me from great embarrassment by allowing me to recall the offer." The explanatory letter in which the antedated letter was enclosed gave Cameron only this assurance as to Lincoln's purpose: "If I should make a Cabinet appointment for Pennsylvania before I reach Washington, I will not do so without consulting you and giving all the weight to your views and wishes which I consistently can." None of these letters were

made public by Cameron, but it was well understood that it was an open fight for and against him, and Pennsylvania was convulsed by that struggle from the 1st of January until the Cabinet was announced after the inauguration of the President.

When Lincoln arrived in Washington the five members of the Cabinet who had been positively chosen were Seward, Bates, Chase, Welles, and Smith. The ten days he spent at the Capital before becoming President were given up almost wholly to a battle over the two remaining Cabinet portfolios. The appointment of Cameron and Blair was not finally determined until the day before the inauguration, and then the Cameron issue was decided by the powerful intervention of Seward and Weed. They were greatly disappointed that Cameron had failed to deliver the Pennsylvania delegation to Seward, as they had been led to expect, but they were intensely embittered against Curtin because he and Lane had both openly declared at Chicago that Seward's nomination would mean their inevitable defeat. Looking back upon that contest with the clearer insight that the lapse of thirty years must give, I do not see how Lincoln could have done otherwise than appoint Cameron as a member of his Cabinet, viewed from the standpoint he had assumed. He desired to reconcile party differences by calling his Presidential competitors around him, and that opened the way for Cameron. He acted with entire sincerity, and in addition to the powerful pressure for Cameron's appointment made by many who were entitled to respect, he felt that he was not free from the obligation made in his name by Davis at Chicago to make Cameron a member of his Cabinet. The appointment was not made wholly for that reason, but that pledge probably resolved Lincoln's doubts in Cameron's favor, and he was accepted as Secretary of War. That there was some degree of mutual distrust between Lincoln and Cameron was a necessity from the circumstances surrounding the selection; but as there was no very large measure of mutual trust between Lincoln and any

of his Cabinet officers, Cameron's relations with the President were little if any more strained than were the relations of his brother constitutional advisers with their chief; and Cameron's practical views in the grave emergency in which the administration was placed were probably of more value to Lincoln at times than were the counsels of most of the Cabinet. Every member had his own theory of meeting the appalling crisis, from peaceable dismemberment of the Republic to aggressive war, while Lincoln had no policy but to await events, and he counseled with all and trusted none. Cameron entered the Cabinet, therefore, with about equal opportunity among his associates to win and hold power with the President, and his retirement within less than a year was not due to any prejudices or apprehensions which may have been created by the bitter struggle against his appointment.

Had the most capable, experienced, and upright man of the nation been called to the head of the War Department when Lincoln was inaugurated in 1861, it would have been impossible for him to administer that office without flagrant abuses. The government was entirely unprepared for war. It was without armies, without guns, without munitions of war; indeed, it had to improvise everything needed to meet an already well-organized Confederate army. Contracts had to be made with such haste as to forbid the exercise of sound discretion in obtaining what the country needed; and Cameron, with his peculiar political surroundings, with a horde of partisans clamoring for spoils, was compelled either to reject the confident expectation of his friends or to submit to imminent peril from the grossest abuse of his delegated authority. He was soon brought under the severest criticism of leading journals and statesmen of his own party, and Representative Dawes led an investigation of the alleged abuses of the War Department, which resulted in a scathing report against Cameron's methods in administering the office, and a vote of censure upon Cameron by the House. Lincoln promptly exhibited the generous sense of justice that always characterized

him by sending a special message to the House, exculpating Cameron, because the acts for which he was criticised had not been exclusively Cameron's, but were largely acts for which the President and Cabinet were equally responsible. Some ten years later the House expunged the resolution of censure. Notwithstanding the message of Lincoln lessening the burden of reproach cast upon Cameron by the House, popular distrust was very general as to the administration of the War Department, and the demands for Cameron's removal grew in both power and intensity. He was not accused of individual corruption, but the severe strain put upon the national credit led to the severest criticisms of all manner of public profligacy, and it culminated in a formal appeal to the President from leading financial men of the country for an immediate change in the Minister of War.

I have no reason to believe that Lincoln would have appointed a new Secretary of War had not public considerations made it imperative. His personal relations with Cameron were as pleasant as his relations with any other of his Cabinet officers, and in many respects Cameron was doubtless a valuable adviser because of his clear, practical, common-sense views of public affairs. The one vital issue that Cameron very early appreciated was that of slavery. As early as May, 1861, he wrote to General Butler, instructing him to refrain from surrendering to their masters any slaves who came within his lines, and to employ them "in the services to which they may be best adapted." That was the first step taken by the administration toward the overthrow of slavery. In August of the same year General Fremont issued a proclamation in Missouri declaring the slaves of all those in the Confederate service to be for ever free, which was a substantial emancipation of all slaves in Missouri. Lincoln at once revoked the Fremont order, and sent Secretary Cameron and the Adjutant-General to personally examine into the situation in Missouri and report upon it. Cameron obviously sympathized with Fremont's emancipation ideas, and, instead of delivering to

Fremont the order for his removal prepared before he left Washington, he finally decided to bring it back with him and to give Fremont an opportunity to retrieve himself. Lincoln, always patient, yielded to Fremont's importunities, and permitted him to remain in command until October, when he sent General Curtis in person to deliver the order of removal, with the single condition that if Fremont "shall then have, in personal command, fought and won a battle, or shall then be actually in battle, or shall then be in the immediate presence of the enemy in expectation of a battle, it is not to be delivered, but held for further orders." As Fremont was not near a battle, he was relieved of his command.

Cameron pressed the slavery issue to the extent of a flagrant outrage upon his chief by recommending the arming of slaves in his first annual report without the knowledge of the President, and sending it out in printed form to the postmasters of the country for delivery to the newspapers after having been presented to Congress. The slavery question had then become an important political theme, and politicians were shaping their lines to get into harmony with it. In this report Cameron declared in unqualified terms in favor of arming the slaves for military service. Lincoln was not only shocked, but greatly grieved when he learned the character of Cameron's recommendation, and he at once ordered that the copies be recalled by telegraph, the report revised, and a new edition printed. Cameron submitted as gracefully as possible, and revised his report, limiting his recommendations about slaves to the suggestion that they should not be returned to their masters. While this episode did not produce unfriendly personal relations between Lincoln and Cameron, it certainly was a severe strain upon Lincoln's trust in the fidelity of his War Minister; but Lincoln was too wise to put himself in open antagonism to the antislavery sentiment of the country by removing Cameron for his offensive and surreptitious antislavery report. The financial pressure for Cameron's removal would probably have accomplished it

under any circumstances, and Lincoln waited more than a month after the flurry over Cameron's report.

There have been many and conflicting accounts given to the public of Cameron's retirement from the Lincoln Cabinet, no one of which is wholly correct, and most of them incorrect in vital particulars. Cameron had verbally assured the President when censured by Congress, and again when the dispute arose over his annual report, that his resignation was at Lincoln's disposal at any time, but he had no knowledge of Lincoln's purpose to make a change in the War Department until he received Lincoln's letter in January, 1862, informing him of the change. In Nicolay and Hays' *Life of Lincoln* (volume 5, page 128) is given what purports to be the letter delivered to Cameron notifying him of the change. Lincoln certainly wrote that letter, as his biographers have published it from his manuscript, but it is not the letter that was delivered to Cameron. Lincoln sent his letter to Cameron by Chase, who met Cameron late in the evening after he had dined with Colonel Forney, and he delivered the letter in entire ignorance of its contents. I happened to be spending the evening with Colonel Thomas A. Scott, then Cameron's Assistant Secretary of War, when Cameron came in near the midnight hour and exhibited an extraordinary degree of emotion. He laid the letter down upon Scott's table, and invited us both to read it, saying that it meant personal as well as political destruction, and was an irretrievable wrong committed upon him by the President. We were not then, and indeed never had been, in political sympathy, but our friendly personal relations had never been interrupted. He appealed to me, saying: "This is not a political affair; it means personal degradation; and while we do not agree politically, you know I would gladly aid you personally if it were in my power." Cameron was affected even to tears, and wept bitterly over what he regarded as a personal affront from Lincoln. I remember not only the substance of Lincoln's letter, but its language, almost, if not quite, literally, as follows: "I have

this day nominated Hon. Edwin M. Stanton to be Secretary of War and you to be Minister Plenipotentiary to Russia." Although the message did not go to the Senate that day, it had been prepared and was sent in pursuance of that notice. Colonel Scott, who was a man of great versatility of resources, at once suggested that Lincoln did not intend personal offense to Cameron, and in that I fully agreed; and it was then and there arranged that on the following day Lincoln should be asked to withdraw the offensive letter; to permit Cameron to antedate a letter of resignation, and for Lincoln to write a kind acceptance of the same. The letter delivered by Chase was recalled; a new correspondence was prepared, and a month later given to the public.

Cameron had no knowledge or even suspicion of Stanton succeeding him. Chase and Seward, as well as Cameron, have claimed direct or indirect influence in the selection of Stanton, but there was not a single member of the Cabinet who knew of Stanton's appointment until Lincoln notified Cameron of the change. Stanton had been in open, malignant opposition to the administration only a few months before, but he was then the closest friend and personal counselor of General McClellan; was in hearty sympathy with the war; was resolutely and aggressively honest; and Lincoln chose him without consulting any, as far as I have ever been able to learn, unless it was General McClellan. One of the many good results he expected from Stanton as War Minister was entire harmony between him and the general commanding the armies.

Cameron well concealed his disappointment at the manner of his retirement from the Cabinet; wisely maintained personal relations with Lincoln; and when he returned from Russia, after less than a year of service as minister, he resumed active political life, and was one of the earliest of the political leaders to foresee that the people would force the renomination of Lincoln, regardless of the favor or disfavor of politicians. The early movement in January, 1864, in

which Curtin cordially co-operated, by which the unanimous recommendation of the Republican members of the Pennsylvania Legislature was given for Lincoln's renomination, was suggested by Cameron; and Lincoln, with a sagacity that never failed him, took the earliest opportunity to attach Cameron so firmly to his cause that separation would be impossible. His first movement in that line was the Cameron mission to Fortress Monroe to ask Butler to accept the Vice-Presidency. This was in March, 1864, and Cameron was one of the very few whom Lincoln consulted about the Vice-Presidency until he finally settled upon the nomination of Johnson, in which Cameron reluctantly concurred, and he went to the Baltimore convention as a delegate-at-large to execute Lincoln's wishes. He became chairman of the Republican State Committee in Pennsylvania, and doubtless would have been in very close relations with the President during his second term had Lincoln's life been spared.

I have written of Lincoln and Cameron with some hesitation, because during the thirty years in which Cameron and I were both more or less active in politics we never were in political sympathy. He had retired from his first term of senatorial service before I had become a voter, and was thirty years my senior. He was then a Democrat and I a Whig, and the political hostility continued when in later years we were of the same political faith. He never was a candidate with my support, nor was I ever a candidate with his support, even when I was the unanimous nominee of our party. We differed radically in political methods, and often in bitterness, but our personal relations were never strained, and on occasions he confided in me and received friendly personal service that he warmly appreciated. We many times had a truce to attain some common end, but it was never misunderstood as anything more than a truce for the special occasion. When he entered the Lincoln Cabinet he knew that I would gladly have aided him to success, and we seldom met without an hour or more of pleasant personal intercourse

over a bottle of wine, the only stimulant he ever indulged in. In 1873 he was elected to his fourth term to the Senate and I was a State Senator. An effort was made by legislative mercenaries to call into the field some man of large fortune as his competitor. He called on me, stated the case, and appealed to me to oppose the movement, as it was obviously dishonest. It was expected that my opposition to Cameron would make me willing to join any movement for his defeat; but I at once assured him that, while I would not support his election, I would earnestly oppose any effort to force him into the corrupt conciliation of venal legislators. He thanked me, and added: "I can rely upon you, and I will now dismiss the thieves without ceremony." The movement failed, and he was elected by the united vote of his party, while I voted for the late William D. Kelley. No man has so strongly impressed his personality upon the politics of Pennsylvania as has Simon Cameron, and the political power he organized is as potent in the state to-day (1892) as at any time during his life. He was one of the few men who voluntarily retired from the Senate when he could have continued his service during life. He survived his retirement a full dozen years; his intercourse mellowed into the gentlest relations with old-time friends and foes, and in the ripeness of more than fourscore years and ten.

CHAPTER TWELVE

LINCOLN AND STANTON

OF ALL the men intimately connected with Abraham Lincoln during our Civil War, Edwin M. Stanton presented the strangest medley of individual attributes. He was a man of whom two histories might be written as widely diverging as night and day, portraying him as worthy of eminent praise and as worthy of scorching censure, and yet both absolutely true. His dominant quality was his heroic mould. He could be heroic to a degree that seemed almost superhuman, and yet at times submissive to the very verge of cowardice. Like Lincoln, he fully trusted no man; but, unlike Lincoln, he distrusted all, and I doubt whether any man prominently connected with the government gave confidence to so few as did Stanton. He in turn trusted and hated nearly every general prominent in the early part of the war. He was McClellan's closest personal friend and counselor when he entered the Lincoln Cabinet, and later became McClellan's most vindictive and vituperative foe. The one general of the war who held his confidence without interruption from the time he became Commander-in-Chief of the armies until the close of the war was General Grant, and he literally commanded it by distinctly defining his independent attitude as General-in-Chief when he accepted his commission as Lieutenant-General. Stanton often spoke of, and to, public men, military and civil, with a withering sneer. I have heard him scores of times thus speak of Lincoln, and several times thus speak to Lincoln. He was a man of extreme moods; often

petulant, irritating, and senselessly unjust, and at times one of the most amiable, genial, and delightful conversationalists I have ever met. He loved antagonism, and there was hardly a period during his remarkable service as war minister in which he was not, on some more or less important point, in positive antagonism with the President. In his antagonisms he was, as a rule, offensively despotic, and often pressed them upon Lincoln to the very utmost point of Lincoln's forbearance; but he knew when to call a halt upon himself, as he well knew that there never was a day or an hour during his service in the Cabinet that Lincoln was not his absolute master. He respected Lincoln's authority because it was greater than his own, but he had little respect for Lincoln's fitness for the responsible duties of the Presidency. I have seen him at times as tender and gentle as a woman, his heart seeming to agonize over the sorrows of the humblest; and I have seen him many more times turn away with the haughtiest contempt from appeals which should at least have been treated with respect. He had few personal and fewer political friends, and he seemed proud of the fact that he had more personal and political enemies than any prominent officer of the government. Senators, Representatives, and high military commanders were often offended by his wanton arrogance, and again thawed into cordial relations by his effusive kindness. Taken all in all, Edwin M. Stanton was capable of the grandest and the meanest actions of any great man I have ever known, and he has reared imperishable monuments to the opposing qualities he possessed.

Stanton had rendered an incalculable service to the nation by his patriotic efforts in the Cabinet of Buchanan. Lewis Cass had resigned from the Premiership (Secretary of State) because he was much more aggressive in his ideas of meeting rebellion than was the President. Attorney-General Jeremiah S. Black was promoted to the head of the Cabinet, and Stanton was called in as Black's successor. It was Judge Black who saved Buchanan's administration from sudden and ir-

retrievable wreck at the outset of the issue, and he doubtless dictated the appointment of Stanton, who was his close personal friend. From the time that Stanton entered the Buchanan Cabinet the attitude of the administration was so pointedly changed that none could mistake it. He was positively and aggressively loyal to the government, and as positively and aggressively hated rebellion. While Stanton and Black generally acted in concert during the few remaining months of the Buchanan administration, they became seriously estranged before the close of the Lincoln administration—so much so that Black, in an article published in the *Galaxy* of June, 1870, said of Stanton: "Did he accept the confidence of the President (Buchanan) and the Cabinet with a predetermined intent to betray it?" After Stanton's retirement from the Buchanan Cabinet when Lincoln was inaugurated, he maintained the closest confidential relations with Buchanan, and wrote him many letters expressing the utmost contempt for Lincoln, the Cabinet, the Republican Congress, and the general policy of the administration. These letters, given to the public in Curtis's life of Buchanan, speak freely of the "painful imbecility of Lincoln," of the "venality and corruption" which ran riot in the government, and expressed the belief that no better condition of things was possible "until Jeff Davis turns out the whole concern." He was firmly impressed for some weeks after the battle of Bull Run that the government was utterly overthrown, as he repeatedly refers to the coming of Davis into the national capital. In one letter he says that "in less than thirty days Davis will be in possession of Washington;" and it is an open secret that Stanton advised the revolutionary overthrow of the Lincoln government, to be replaced by General McClellan as military dictator.

These letters published by Curtis, bad as they are, are not the worst letters written by Stanton to Buchanan. Some of them were so violent in their expressions against Lincoln and the administration that they have been charitably withheld

from the public, but they remain in the possession of the surviving relatives of President Buchanan. Of course, Lincoln had no knowledge of the bitterness exhibited by Stanton to himself personally and to his administration, but if he had known the worst that Stanton ever said or wrote about him, I doubt not that he would have called him to the Cabinet in January, 1862. The disasters the army suffered made Lincoln forgetful of everything but the single duty of suppressing the rebellion. From the day that McClellan was called to the command of the Army of the Potomac in place of McDowell, Stanton was in enthusiastic accord with the military policy of the government. The constant irritation between the War Department and military commanders that had vexed Lincoln in the early part of the war made him anxious to obtain a war minister who was not only resolutely honest, but who was in close touch with the commander of the armies. This necessity, with the patriotic record that Stanton had made during the closing months of the Buchanan administration, obviously dictated the appointment of Stanton. It was Lincoln's own act. Stanton had been discussed as a possible successor to Cameron along with many others in outside circles, but no one had any reason to anticipate Stanton's appointment from any intimation given by the President. Lincoln and Stanton had no personal intercourse whatever from the time of Lincoln's inauguration until Stanton became his war minister. In a letter to Buchanan, written March 1, 1862, Stanton says: "My accession to my present position was quite as sudden and unexpected as the confidence you bestowed upon me in calling me to your Cabinet." In another letter, written on the 18th of May, 1862, he said: "I hold my present position at the request of the President, who knew me personally, but to whom I had not spoken from the 4th of March, 1861, until the day he handed me my commission." The appointment was made because Lincoln believed that Stanton's loyal record in the Buchanan Cabinet and his prominence as the foe of every form of jobbery would inspire the highest

degree of confidence in that department throughout the entire country. In that he judged correctly. From the day that he entered the War Office until the surrender of the Confederate armies, Stanton, with all his vagaries and infirmities, gave constant inspiration to the loyal sentiment of the country, and rendered a service that probably only Edwin M. Stanton could have rendered at the time.

Lincoln was not long in discovering that in his new Secretary of War he had an invaluable but most troublesome Cabinet officer, but he saw only the great and good offices that Stanton was performing for the imperiled Republic. Confidence was restored in financial circles by the appointment of Stanton, and his name as war minister did more to strengthen the faith of the people in the government credit than would have been probable from the appointment of any other man of that day. He was a terror to all the hordes of jobbers and speculators and camp-followers whose appetites had been whetted by a great war, and he enforced the strictest discipline throughout our armies. He was seldom capable of being civil to any officer away from the army on leave of absence unless he had been summoned by the government for conference or special duty, and he issued the strictest orders from time to time to drive the throng of military idlers from the capital and keep them at their posts. He was stern to savagery in his enforcement of military law. The wearied sentinel who slept at his post found no mercy in the heart of Stanton, and many times did Lincoln's humanity overrule his fiery minister. Any neglect of military duty was sure of the swiftest punishment, and seldom did he make even just allowance for inevitable military disaster. He had profound, unfaltering faith in the Union cause, and, above all, he had unfaltering faith in himself. He believed that he was in all things except in name Commander-in-Chief of the armies and the navy of the nation, and it was with unconcealed reluctance that he at times deferred to the authority of the President. He was a great organizer in theory, and harsh to the utmost in enforcing his

theories upon military commanders. He at times conceived impossible things, and peremptorily ordered them executed, and woe to the man who was unfortunate enough to demonstrate that Stanton was wrong. If he escaped without disgrace he was more than fortunate, and many, very many, would have thus fallen unjustly had it not been for Lincoln's cautious and generous interposition to save those who were wantonly censured. He would not throw the blame upon Stanton, but he would save the victim of Stanton's injustice, and he always did it so kindly that even Stanton could not complain beyond a churlish growl.

Stanton understood the magnitude of the rebellion, and he understood also that an army to be effective must be completely organized in all its departments. He had no favorites to promote at the expense of the public service, and his constant and honest aim was to secure the best men for every important position. As I have said, he assumed, in his own mind, that he was Commander-in-Chief, and there was nothing in military movements, or in the quartermaster, commissary, hospital, secret service, or any other department relating to the war, that he did not claim to comprehend and seek to control in his absolute way. I doubt whether his partiality ever unjustly promoted a military officer, and I wish that I could say that his prejudices had never hindered the promotion or driven from the service faithful and competent military commanders. His hatreds were intense, implacable, and yielded to the single authority of Lincoln, and that authority he knew would be exercised only in extreme emergencies. The effect of such a war minister was to enforce devotion to duty throughout the entire army, and it is impossible to measure the beneficent results of Stanton's policy in our vast military campaigns. Great as he was in the practical administration of his office that could be visible to the world, he added immeasurably to his greatness as war minister by the impress of his wonderful personality upon the whole military and civil service.

Stanton's intense and irrepressible hatreds were his greatest infirmity and did much to deform his brilliant record as war minister. A pointed illustration of his bitter and unreasonable prejudices was given in the case of Jere McKibben, whom he arbitrarily confined in Old Capitol Prison without even the semblance of a pretext to excuse the act. The Constitution of Pennsylvania had been so amended during the summer of 1864 as to authorize soldiers to vote in the field. The Legislature was called in extra session to provide for holding elections in the army. It was in the heat of the Presidential contest and party bitterness was intensified to the uttermost. Despite the earnest appeals of Governor Curtin and all my personal importunities with prominent legislators of our own party, an election law was passed that was obviously intended to give the minority no rights whatever in holding army elections. The governor was empowered to appoint State Commissioners, who were authorized to attend the elections without any direct authority in conducting them. As the law was violent in its character and liable to the grossest abuses, without any means to restrain election frauds, the Democrats of the state and country justly complained of it with great earnestness. The governor decided, as a matter of justice to the Democrats, to appoint several Democratic commissioners, but it was with difficulty that any could be prevailed upon to accept. He requested me to see several prominent Democrats and obtain their consent to receive his commission and act under it. As McKibben had three brothers in the Army of the Potomac, I supposed it would be pleasant for him to make a visit there in an official way, and I suggested it to him. He promptly answered: "Why, Stanton would put me in Old Capitol Prison before I was there a day. He hates our family for no other reason that I know of than that my father was one of his best friends in Pittsburgh when he needed a friend." I assured him that Stanton would not attempt any violence against a man who held the commission of the governor of our state, and he finally consented to go,

having first solemnly pledged me to protect him in case he got into any difficulty.

McKibben and the other commissioners from Philadelphia were furnished the election papers and started down to the army, then quietly resting on the James River. On the second day after he left I received a telegram from him dated Washington, saying: "Stanton has me in Old Capitol Prison; come at once." I hastened to Washington, having telegraphed to Lincoln to allow me to see him between eleven and twelve o'clock that night, when I should arrive. I went direct to the White House and told the President the exact truth. I explained the character of the law of our state; that I had personally prevailed upon McKibben to go as a commissioner to give a semblance of decency to its execution; that he was not only guiltless of any offense, as he knew how delicately he was situated, but that he was powerless to do any wrong, and I insisted upon McKibben's immediate discharge from prison. Lincoln knew of Stanton's hatred for the McKibbens, as he had been compelled to protect four of McKibben's brothers to give them the promotion they had earned by most heroic conduct in battle, and he was much distressed at Stanton's act. He sent immediately to the War Department to get the charge against McKibben, and it did not require five minutes of examination to satisfy him that it was utterly groundless and a malicious wrong committed by Stanton. He said it was a "stupid blunder," and at once proposed to discharge McKibben on his parole. I urged that he should be discharged unconditionally, but Lincoln's caution prevented that. He said: "It seems hardly fair to discharge McKibben unconditionally without permitting Stanton to give his explanation;" and he added, "You know, McClure, McKibben is safe, parole or no parole, so go and get him out of prison." I saw that it would be useless to attempt to change Lincoln's purpose, but I asked him to fix an hour the next morning when I could meet Stanton in his presence to have McKibben discharged from his parole. He fixed ten o'clock the next morning for

the meeting, and then wrote, in his own hand, the order for McKibben's discharge, which I hurriedly bore to Old Capitol Prison and had him released.

Promptly at ten o'clock the next morning I went to the White House to obtain McKibben's discharge from his parole. Lincoln was alone, but Stanton came in a few minutes later. He was pale with anger and his first expression was: "Well, McClure, what damned rebel are you here to get out of trouble this morning?" I had frequently been to Washington before when arbitrary and entirely unjustifiable arrests of civilians had been made in Pennsylvania, to have the prisoners discharged from military custody; and as I had never applied in such a case without good reason, and never without success even when opposed by Stanton, he evidently meant to square up some old accounts with me over McKibben. I said to him and with some feeling: "Your arrest of McKibben was a cowardly act; you knew McKibben was guiltless of any offense, and you did it to gratify a brutal hatred." I told him also that I had prevailed upon McKibben, against his judgment, to act as a State Commissioner to give a semblance of decency to what would evidently be a farcical and fraudulent election in the army, and that if he had examined the complaint soberly for one minute, he would have seen that it was utterly false. I told him that I had requested his appearance there with the President to have McKibben discharged from his parole, and that I now asked him to assent to it. He turned from me, walked hurriedly back and forth across the room several times before he answered, and then he came up to me and in a voice tremulous with passion said: "I decline to discharge McKibben from his parole. You can make formal application for it if you choose, and I will consider and decide it." His manner was as offensive as it was possible even for Stanton to make it, and I resented it by saying: "I don't know what McKibben will do, but if I were Jere McKibben, as sure as there is a God I would crop your ears before I left Washington." He made no reply, but suddenly whirled

around on his heel and walked out of the President's room. Lincoln had said nothing. He was used to such ebullitions from Stanton, and after the Secretary had gone he remarked in a jocular way, "Well, McClure, you didn't get on very far with Stanton, did you? but he'll come all right; let the matter rest." Before leaving the President's room I wrote out a formal application to Stanton for the discharge of McKibben from his parole. Several days after I received a huge official envelope enclosing a letter, all in Stanton's bold scrawl, saying that the request for the discharge of Jere McKibben from his parole had been duly considered, and "the application could not be granted consistently with the interests of the public service." McKibben outlived Stanton, but died a prisoner on parole.

After such a turbulent interview with Stanton it would naturally be supposed that our intercourse thereafter would be severely strained, if not wholly interrupted; but I had occasion to call at the War Department within a few weeks, and never was greeted more cordially in my life than I was by Stanton. The election was over, the military power of the Confederacy was obviously broken, and the Secretary was in the very best of spirits. He promptly granted what I wanted done, which was not a matter of much importance, and it was so cheerfully and generously assented to that I carefully thought of everything that I wanted from his department. all of which was done in a most gracious manner. I puzzled my brain to make sure I should not forget anything, and it finally occurred to me that a friend I much desired to serve had lately appealed to me to aid in obtaining promotion for a young officer in the quartermaster's department whom I did not know personally. It seemed that this was the chance for the young officer. I suggested to Stanton that Quartermaster ——— was reputed to be a very faithful and efficient officer, and entitled to higher promotion than he had received. Stanton picked up his pen, saying: "It will give me great pleasure, sir; what is his name?" I had to answer that I could not recall

his name in full, but he took down the officer's rank and last name and assured me that he would be promptly promoted. I supposed that a change of mood would make him forgetful of this promise; but the young quartermaster wore new shoulder-straps within ten days, and won distinction as the chief of his department in large independent army movements in Virginia. I never had the pleasure of meeting the worthy officer who thus unexpectedly secured his promotion, and he is doubtless ignorant to this day of the peculiar way in which it was accomplished.

Stanton's hatred for McClellan became a consuming passion before the close of the Peninsular campaign. When McClellan was before Yorktown and complaining of his inadequate forces to march upon Richmond, Stanton summed him up in the following expression: "If he (McClellan) had a million men, he would swear the enemy had two millions, and then he would sit down in the mud and yell for three." He was impatient and often fearfully petulant in his impatience. He was disappointed in McClellan not marching directly upon Richmond by Manassas, and he was greatly disappointed again when McClellan laid siege to Yorktown, but he was ever ready to congratulate, in his blunt way, when anything was accomplished. When General "Baldy" Smith made a reconnoissance at Yorktown that produced the first successful results of that campaign, Stanton answered McClellan's announcement of the movement: "Good for the first lick; hurrah for Smith and the one-gun battery!" but from that time until the withdrawal of the army from the Peninsula, Stanton never found occasion to commend McClellan, and McClellan was a constant bone of contention between Stanton and Lincoln. Lincoln's patience and forbearance were marked in contrast with Stanton's violence of temper and intensity of hatred. McClellan so far forgot himself as to telegraph to Stanton after the retreat to the James River: "If I save this army now, I tell you plainly that I owe no thanks to you or to any other person in Washington. You have done

your best to sacrifice this army." Any other President than Lincoln would have immediately relieved McClellan of his command, and Stanton not only would have relieved him, but would have dismissed him from the service. Lincoln exhibited no resentment whatever for the ill-advised and insubordinate telegram from McClellan. On the contrary, he seemed inclined to continue McClellan in command, and certainly exhibited every desire to sustain him to the utmost. In a letter addressed to the Secretary of State on the same day that McClellan's telegram was received he expressed his purpose to call for additional troops, and said: "I expect to maintain this contest until successful, or till I die, or I am conquered, or my term expires, or Congress or the country forsakes me."

This was one of the most perplexing situations in which Lincoln was ever placed. The defeat of the army would not, in itself, have been so serious had Lincoln been able to turn to commanders in whom he could implicitly confide. He had abundant resources and could supply all needed additional troops, but where could he turn for safe advice? He had, to a very large extent, lost faith in McClellan. When he counseled with Stanton he encountered insuperable hatreds, and he finally, as was his custom, decided upon his own course of action and hurried off to West Point to confer with General Scott. His visit to West Point startled the country and quite as much startled the Cabinet, as not a single member of it had any intimation of his intended journey. What passed at the interview between Lincoln and Scott was never known to any, so far as I have been able to learn, and I believe that no one has pretended to have had knowledge of it. It is enough to know that Pope was summoned to the command of a new army, called the Army of Virginia, embracing the commands of Fremont, Banks, and McDowell, and that Halleck was made General-in-Chief. The aggressive campaign of Lee, resulting in the second battle of Bull Run and the utter defeat of Pope, brought the army back into the Washington intrenchments in a most demoralized condition. It was here that

Lincoln and Stanton came into conflict again on the question of the restoration of McClellan to command. Without consulting either the General-in-Chief or his war minister, Lincoln assigned McClellan to the command of the defenses of Washington, and as the various commands of Pope's broken and demoralized army came back into the intrenchments in utter confusion they thereby came again under the command of McClellan.

When it was discovered that McClellan was thus practically in command of the Army of the Potomac again, Stanton was aroused to the fiercest hostility. He went so far as to prepare a remonstrance to the President in writing against McClellan's continuance in the command of that army or of any army of the Union. This remonstrance was not only signed by Stanton, but by Chase, Bates, and Smith, with the concurrence of Welles, who thought it indelicate for him to sign it. After the paper had been prepared under Stanton's impetuous lead, some of the more considerate members of the Cabinet who had joined him took pause to reflect that Lincoln was in the habit not only of having his own way, but of having his own way of having his own way, and the protest was never presented. Lincoln knew McClellan's great organizing powers, and he knew the army needed first of all a commander who was capable of restoring it to discipline. To use his own expressive language about the emergency, he believed that "there is no one in the army who can command the fortifications and lick those troops of ours into shape one-half as well as he could." It was this conviction that made Lincoln forget all of McClellan's failings and restore him to command, and Stanton was compelled to submit in sullen silence.

Lincoln's restoration of McClellan to command in disregard of the most violent opposition of Stanton was only one of the many instances in which he and his war minister came into direct and positive conflict, and always with the same result; but many times as Stanton was vanquished in his conflicts with Lincoln, it was not in his nature to be any the

less Edwin M. Stanton. As late as 1864 he had one of his most serious disputes with Lincoln, in which he peremptorily refused to obey an order from the President directing that certain prisoners of war, who expressed a desire to take the oath of allegiance and enter the Union army, should be mustered into the service and credited to the quotas of certain districts. An exact account of this dispute is preserved by Provost-Marshal General Fry, who was charged with the execution of the order, and who was present when Lincoln and Stanton discussed it. Stanton positively refused to obey the order, and said to Lincoln: "You must see that your order cannot be executed." Lincoln answered with an unusually peremptory tone for him: "Mr. Secretary, I reckon you'll have to execute the order." Stanton replied in his imperious way: "Mr. President, I cannot do it; the order is an improper one, and I cannot execute it." To this Lincoln replied in a manner that forbade all further dispute: "Mr. Secretary, it will have to be done." A few minutes thereafter, as stated by Provost-Marshal General Fry in a communication to the *New York Tribune* several years later, Stanton issued instructions to him for the execution of the President's order.

Notwithstanding the many and often irritating conflicts that Lincoln had with Stanton, there never was an hour during Stanton's term as war minister that Lincoln thought of removing him. Indeed, I believe that at no period during the war, after Stanton had entered the Cabinet, did Lincoln feel that any other man could fill Stanton's place with equal usefulness to the country. He had the most unbounded faith in Stanton's loyalty and in his public and private integrity. He was in hearty sympathy with Stanton's aggressive earnestness for the prosecution of the war, and at times hesitated, even to the extent of what he feared was individual injustice, to restrain Stanton's violent assaults upon others. It will be regretted by the impartial historian of the future that Stanton was capable of impressing his intense hatred so conspicuously upon the annals of the country, and that Lincoln, in several

memorable instances, failed to reverse his war minister when he had grave doubts as to the wisdom or justice of his methods. It was Stanton's fierce resentment that made just verdicts impossible in some military trials which will ever be historic—notably, the unjust verdict depriving Fitz John Porter at once of his commission and citizenship, and the now admittedly unjust verdict that sent Mrs. Surratt to the gallows. Lincoln long hesitated before giving his assent to the judgment against Porter, as is clearly shown by the fact that, with Pope's accusations against Porter fresh before him, he assented to McClellan's request and assigned Porter to active command in the Antietam campaign, and personally thanked Porter on the Antietam field, after the battle, for his services. Another enduring monument of Stanton's resentment is the Arlington National Cemetery. The home of Lee was taken under the feeblest color of law that Stanton well knew could not be maintained, and the buildings surrounded with graves even to the very door of the venerable mansion, so that it might never be reclaimed as the home of the Confederate chieftain. The government made restitution to the Lees in obedience to the decision of its highest court, but the monument of hate is imperishable.

Soon after the surrender of Lee, Stanton, severely broken in health by the exacting duties he had performed, tendered his resignation, believing that his great work was finished. Lincoln earnestly desired him to remain, and he did so. The assassination of Lincoln called him to even graver duties than had before confronted him. His bitter conflict with Johnson and his violent issue with Sherman stand out as exceptionally interesting chapters of the history of the war. It was President Johnson's attempted removal of Stanton in violation of the Tenure-of-Office Act that led to the President's impeachment, and Stanton persisted in holding his Cabinet office until Johnson was acquitted by the Senate, when he resigned and was succeeded by General Schofield on the 2d of June, 1868. After his retirement Stanton never exhibited any great de-

gree of either physical or mental vigor. I last saw him in Philadelphia in the fall of 1868, where he came in answer to a special invitation from the Union League to deliver a political address in the Academy of Music in favor of Grant's election to the Presidency. I called on him at his hotel and found him very feeble, suffering greatly from asthmatic disorders, and in his public address he was often strangely forgetful of facts and names, and had to be prompted by gentlemen on the stage. It may be said of Stanton that he sacrificed the vigor of his life to the service of his country in the sorest trial of its history, and when President Grant nominated him as Justice of the Supreme Court, on the 20th of December, 1869, all knew that it was an empty honor, as he was both physically and mentally unequal to the new duties assigned to him. Four days thereafter Edwin M. Stanton died.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

LINCOLN AND McCLELLAN

Not until all the lingering personal, political, and military passions of the war shall have perished can the impartial historian tell the true story of Abraham Lincoln's relations to George B. McClellan, nor will the just estimate of McClellan as a military chieftain be recorded until the future historian comes to his task entirely free from the prejudices of the present. Although more than a quarter of a century has elapsed since the close of the war, and countless contributions have been given to the history of that conflict from every shade of conviction that survived it, McClellan's ability as a military commander and the correctness of Lincoln's action in calling him to command and in dismissing him from command, are as earnestly disputed to-day as they were in the white heat of the personal and political conflicts of the time. Notwithstanding the bitter partisan assaults which have been made upon McClellan in the violence of party struggles, at times impugning his skill, his courage, and his patriotism, it is safe to say that fair-minded men of every political faith now testify to the absolute purity of his patriotism, to his exceptional skill as a military organizer, and to his courage as a commander. I knew McClellan well, and I believe that no reasonable just man could have known him without yielding to him the highest measure of personal respect. He was one of the most excellent and lovable characters I have ever met, and that he was patriotic in everything that he did, however he may have erred, and that he would have given his life as

a sacrifice to his army or his country had duty required it, will not be doubted within the circle of his personal associations. I saw him frequently after he came to Washington heralded as the "Young Napoleon," to perform the herculean task of organizing the best army that ever was organized in any country within the same period of time. I saw him when he started upon his Peninsula campaign with the hope of victory beaming from his bright young face, and I stood close by his side most of the day when he fought his last battle at Antietam. Only a few months thereafter he was finally relieved from his command, and his military career ended on November 5, 1862, when, by order of the President, he transferred his army to General Burnside and went to Trenton, New Jersey, "for further orders." The "further orders" never came until Presidential election day, 1864, when McClellan resigned his commission as major-general in the army and Sheridan was appointed to his place.

Both Lincoln and McClellan now live only in history, and history will judge them by their achievements as it has judged all mankind. Lincoln was a successful President, and, like the great Roman Germanicus, "fortunate in the opportunity of his death." McClellan was an unsuccessful general and a defeated politician. Such will be the imperishable records of history as to these two men; but even the next generation will see continued disputation as to McClellan's capabilities as a commander, and Lincoln will be censured alike for having maintained and supported McClellan as a military leader, and for having failed to appreciate and support him after having called him to responsible command. None the less, however, will be the irrevocable judgment of history that Lincoln succeeded and that McClellan failed. But why did McClellan fail as a military commander? The answer of his devoted partisans is that he was deliberately hindered and embarrassed in every military movement, and that he would have achieved great success had he been supported as the more successful generals later in the war were

supported by the government. To this comes the response from the friends of Lincoln that he earnestly and heartily seconded McClellan to the utmost of his resources; that he long confided in him when the confidence of his friends had been greatly shattered; that he reappointed him to command against his Cabinet and against the general sentiment of his party leaders; and that whatever failures were suffered by McClellan were the result of his own incompetency or of the inability of the government to meet his wants.

It is unjust to McClellan to judge him by the same standard that is applied to the successful generals who succeeded him. I believe that it was McClellan's greatest misfortune that he was suddenly called to the dazzling position of Commander-in-Chief when he was a comparative novice in great war operations and without the experience necessary to make a great commander. I believe that the 23d of April, 1861, was the fateful day that dated the beginning of McClellan's misfortunes. He was then in Cincinnati, in charge of one of the railroads connected with that city. Pennsylvania troops were then being organized by Governor Curtin, and he was in search of a Pennsylvanian of military education and attainments to be placed in command. He first offered the position to McClellan, who promptly arranged his business to go to Harrisburg in person with the view of accepting it. By special request he stopped at Columbus on his way to Harrisburg to confer with Governor Dennison on some military problems which were vexing the governor of Ohio. He expected to remain at Columbus only a few hours and then proceed to Pennsylvania. While in conference with Governor Dennison he was tendered the commission of major-general commanding the volunteers of Ohio, although ineligible because of his want of residence in that state. The difficulty was obviated by both branches of the Legislature passing, in a few hours, a bill making him eligible, and on the same 23d of April, 1861, he was commissioned as major-general and assigned to the command of the Ohio State troops. This led

to his skirmishes in West Virginia, which in that day were magnified into great battles and great victories, and, when it became necessary to select a successor to Scott as Commander-in-Chief, McClellan was the only general whose victories had attracted the attention of the nation. He was thus called to the responsible position of Commander-in-Chief when a little over thirty years of age, with no experience in war beyond a brief campaign in Mexico, and without the training necessary to enable him to comprehend the most colossal war of modern times. Had he accepted the command of the Pennsylvania troops he would doubtless have made them the best disciplined and most effective division of the Army of the Potomac, would have fought them wisely and gallantly in every conflict, and would have won distinction as a commander with the experience that would have enabled him to maintain it. Instead of floundering along in untrodden paths and committing errors for others to profit by, he would have seen others charged with the gravest responsibility that could be assigned to any military man, would have seen them blunder and fall, and would have been ripened, by his own experience and by the misfortunes of his superiors, for the command that he won so suddenly and twice lost by order of a President who sincerely desired to be McClellan's friend and to give him success.

McClellan's fundamental error, and the one that I believe was the fountain of most, if not all, his misfortunes, was in his assumption not only that Lincoln and the government generally were unfriendly to him when he started out on his spring campaign of 1862, but that they deliberately conspired to prevent him from achieving military success.* This was a fatal error, and it was certainly most unjust to Lincoln. If Mc-

* Don't worry about the wretches in Washington. They have done nearly their worst, and can't do much more. I am sure that I will win in the end, in spite of all their rascality. History will present a sad record of these traitors, who are willing to sacrifice the country and its army for personal spite and personal aims. The people will soon understand the whole matter.—*Gen. McClellan's Letter to his wife*, dated Yorktown, April 11, 1862, in *McClellan's Own Story*, page 310.

Clellan really believed that the government had predetermined his military failure or if he seriously doubted its fidelity, it exhibited moral cowardice on his part to march an army into hopeless battle. He might have believed the President, the Secretary of War, and the administration generally to have been unfriendly to him, and yet, relying upon his ability to win their confidence by winning victory, he could have retained his command with justice to himself and to the country; but his own statements show that he believed then that he would not be permitted to win a victory or to capture Richmond; and, thus believing, he owed it to himself, to the great army he had organized as none other could have organized it, and to the country to whose cause he was undoubtedly loyal, to resign the command and put the responsibility upon those he believed to be conspirators for the destruction of himself and his army.

McClellan has not left this question open to dispute. In *McClellan's Own Story*, written by himself, on page 150, he says: "They (the President and others) determined to ruin me in any event and by any means. First, by endeavoring to force me into premature movements, knowing that a failure would end my military career; afterward by withholding the means necessary to achieve success." On the same page he says: "They determined that I should not succeed, and carried out their determinations only too well, at a fearful sacrifice of blood, time, and treasure." On page 151 in the same book McClellan says: "From the light that has since been thrown on Stanton's character I am satisfied that from an early day he was in this treasonable conspiracy."* It will thus be seen that McClellan started on his Peninsula campaign not merely believing that the President and the ad-

* From the light that has since been thrown on Stanton's character I am satisfied that from an early date he was in this treasonable conspiracy, and that his course in ingratiating himself with me, and pretending to be my friend before he was in office, was only a part of his long system of treachery. . . .

I had never seen Mr. Stanton, and probably had not even heard of him, before reaching Washington in 1861. Not many weeks after arriving I was introduced to him as a safe adviser on legal points. From that moment he did

ministration generally were unfriendly to him, but really believing that they had formed a treasonable conspiracy by which his military movements should be made disastrous and the blood of thousands of brave soldiers sacrificed to accomplish McClellan's overthrow. This is a monstrous accusation against Lincoln, and but for the fact that McClellan presents it so clearly in language from his own pen that none can mistake, it would seem incredible that he could have believed such a conspiracy to exist, and yet led a great army to defeat that treachery on the part of the government would make inevitable. In this I am sure that McClellan does both himself and Lincoln the gravest injustice. Lincoln was the one man of all who was utterly incapable of deliberately hindering military success under any circumstances. There were those who believed it best to protract the war in order to accomplish the overthrow of slavery, but Lincoln was not of that number. On the contrary, he offended many when he distinctly declared in his letter to Greeley, August 22, 1862: "If there be those who would not save the Union unless they could at the same time destroy slavery, I do not agree with them. My paramount object in this struggle is to save the Union, and it is not either to save or to destroy slavery. If I could save the Union without freeing any slave I would do it, and if I could save it by freeing all the slaves I would do it, and if I could save it by freeing some and leaving others alone

his best to ingratiate himself with me, and professed the warmest friendship and devotion. I had no reason to suspect his sincerity, and therefore believed him to be what he professed. The most disagreeable thing about him was the extreme virulence with which he abused the President, the administration, and the Republican party. He carried this to such an extent that I was often shocked by it.

He never spoke of the President in any other way than as the "original gorilla," and often said that Du Chaillu was a fool to wander all the way to Africa in search of what he could so easily have found at Springfield, Illinois. Nothing could be more bitter than his words and manner always were when speaking of the administration and the Republican party. He never gave them credit for honesty or patriotism, and very seldom for any ability.

At some time during the autumn of 1861, Secretary Cameron made quite an abolition speech to some newly-arrived regiment. Next day Stanton urged me to arrest him for inciting to insubordination. He often advocated the propriety of my seizing the government and taking affairs into my own hands.

—*Gen. McClellan in McClellan's Own Story*, pages 151, 152.

I would also do that." What Lincoln wanted was the speediest overthrow of the rebellion and the restoration of the Union, with or without the destruction of slavery; and the assumption that he could have been capable of such a treasonable conspiracy as to deliberately send a general to the field with a great army solely to have that army sacrificed and its commander dishonored is at war with every attribute of Lincoln's character. There never was the blood of a soldier shed in battle that did not bring grief to the heart of Abraham Lincoln, and there never was a disaster of the Union troops that did not shadow his face with sorrow, no matter whether he loved or distrusted the commander. I am quite sure that the two men of all the nation who most desired McClellan's success in the field were Lincoln and McClellan themselves.

I have said that it is unjust to McClellan to compare his achievements in the first great campaign of the war with the achievements of Grant and Sherman in the later campaigns which culminated in the overthrow of the rebellion. All the generals of the early part of the war were making object-lessons to guide themselves and those who succeeded them in later conflicts. In this work the many failed, and many of the most promising among them. The few succeeded and made their names immortal. One of the greatest wars of history produced but one Grant and one Lee; but one Joe Johnston and one Tecumseh Sherman; but one Phil Sheridan and one Stonewall Jackson. Scores of generals on both sides had opportunities of winning the laurels of these great chieftains, but none was equal to the task. It is no reproach to McClellan to say that Grant fought few battles which McClellan would have fought under precisely similar circumstances. McClellan was an organizer, a disciplinarian, and the best defensive general in all the armies of the late war. He would have made a greater Confederate leader than Lee himself. He would never have made the exhaustive and fruitless campaigns of the second Bull Run and Antietam which cost Lee one-fourth of his army when he had feeble means to replace his losses. He never would have made an aggressive campaign to Gettys-

burg when the resources of the Confederacy were so nearly exhausted, and Pickett's charge would never have been dreamed of by McClellan. He was the greatest organizer and defensive officer of the age, but the Union cause demanded swift and terrible blows and countless sacrifices. It had to fight on fields chosen by the enemy. It had often to give two men for one in the death-lists of the struggles, but it had boundless resources to fill the shattered ranks. The most aggressive warfare was certain to bring the speediest victory and with the least sacrifice of life and treasure in the end. Grant met this want. He was the great aggressive general of the war. He always fought when he should have fought, and sometimes fought when it would have been wiser to have refrained. Had he been a Southern general, he would have been an utter failure, for the Southern general had to study how to husband his resources; how to protect the life of every soldier; how to fight only when a thousand men could withstand two thousand; and to that system of warfare Grant was an entire stranger. He was the embodiment of aggressive warfare; McClellan was the embodiment of defensive warfare, and McClellan was as great as Grant in his line, and with no greater limitations upon his military genius.

Grant fought one defensive battle at Shiloh and lost it and lost his command. McClellan fought only one pitched battle as the aggressor at Antietam, and then he was strategically defensive, while tactically aggressive, but his military genius shone resplendent in his defensive battles when retreating to the James River.* Thus a condition confronted McClellan to which his great military genius and attainments were not

* The movement from Washington into Maryland, which culminated in the battles of South Mountain and Antietam, was not a part of an offensive campaign, with the object of the invasion of the enemy's territory and an attack upon his capital, but was defensive in its purposes, although offensive in its character, and would be technically called a "defensive-offensive campaign." It was undertaken at a time when our army had experienced severe defeats, and its object was to preserve the national capital and Baltimore, to protect Pennsylvania from invasion, and to drive the enemy out of Maryland.—*Gen. McClellan in McClellan's Own Story*, page 642.

best adapted, and Grant's star rose and brightened as McClellan's faded, because Grant possessed, in the fullest measure, the qualities needed to win peace and restore the Republic.

No man ever commanded the Army of the Potomac for whom the soldiers had so much affection as they had for McClellan. They knew that he was a soldier and a great soldier. They knew that he would never put them into action unless good generalship dictated it. They knew they were safe from wanton sacrifice while under his command. They knew that he valued the life of every man with the tenderness of a parent, and they loved him because they revered and trusted him. Lincoln fully appreciated and greatly valued the devotion of the army to McClellan. He believed that no other general could have so quickly organized and disciplined a great army out of entirely raw materials as McClellan had done, and he never gave up faith in McClellan until he felt that he could no longer trust the destiny of the war to his direction. He was many times justly fretted at McClellan's complaints about military matters, at his obtrusive criticism about political matters, and especially at his insulting declaration to the Secretary of War, in a letter dated at army headquarters on the Peninsula, June 28, 1862, just after his retreat to the James River, in which he said: "If I save this army now, I tell you plainly that I owe no thanks to you or to any other person in Washington. You have done your best to sacrifice this army." This letter, although addressed to the Secretary of War, distinctly embraced the President in the grave charge of conspiracy to defeat McClellan's army and sacrifice thousands of the lives of his soldiers. None but a man of Lincoln's exceptional forbearance and patience would have tolerated McClellan in command for a day after such a declaration, written from the headquarters of a defeated army, but Lincoln neither dismissed nor reproached him, nor, as far as I can learn, did he ever allude to it.*

* See pages 167-168.

Ten days after the offensive and insubordinate letter was written Lincoln visited McClellan at his headquarters on the James River. While Lincoln was there McClellan personally handed him a letter dated July 7, 1862, that was a caustic criticism of the political and military policy of the administration, and assumed to define not only the military action of the government, but the civil and political policy of the government on all important questions relating to the war. McClellan himself records the fact that Lincoln read the letter in McClellan's presence without comment, and that he never alluded to the subject again. McClellan vigorously protested against the withdrawal of the army from the Peninsula, but the order was peremptory, and he obeyed it with obvious reluctance. His personal feeling toward Lincoln and the administration is clearly exhibited in a letter to his wife written on the 31st of August and published in *McClellan's Own Story*, p. 532. Speaking of Washington, he says: "As a matter of self-respect I cannot go there." On the 1st of September, however, he was called to Washington and given a verbal order by General Halleck, then Commander-in-Chief, to take charge of the defenses of Washington. On the following morning Lincoln and Halleck called on General McClellan at his house and asked him to take command. McClellan states that Lincoln asked him as a favor to the President to "resume command and do the best that could be done." The same day an order was issued from the War Department by Halleck stating that "Major-General McClellan will have command of the fortifications of Washington and all the troops for the defense of the capital." The manner of the restoration of McClellan to command has given rise to latitudinous dispute, but the short story is that most of the Army of the Potomac had been put under command of General Pope in his disastrous battles of the second Bull Run campaign, and both the armies of McClellan and Pope were compelled to retreat into the Washington defenses in a very demoralized condition.

No man better understood McClellan's value as an organizer and as a defensive commander than Lincoln, and he solved the problem himself by calling McClellan to the new command because he believed the capital to be in danger and McClellan the best man to protect it. If he ever consulted any one on the subject, the fact has never been given to the public in any authentic form. Had he consulted his Cabinet, it would have been next to unanimous against giving McClellan any command whatever, and the administration leaders in both branches of Congress would also have been nearly unanimous in demanding McClellan's dismissal from command. Lincoln acted in this case, as was his custom in all severe trials, on his own personal responsibility, and Lincoln, and Lincoln alone, is responsible for calling McClellan to command the defenses of Washington and for permitting McClellan, under that assignment, to take the field for the Antietam campaign without any special orders from the government. The assumption that Lincoln simply consulted his fears in restoring McClellan to command is an absurdity. There were twenty generals in the Army of the Potomac and in Pope's army who could have taken command of the complete defenses of Washington, constructed under McClellan's faultless engineering skill, and protected the capital against double the number of men Lee had in his entire army. That McClellan handled the demoralized army better than any other could have done I do not doubt, but that he was a necessity to save the capital is not to be considered for a moment. It is obvious also that Lincoln believed McClellan to be the best man to command the army in the campaign in pursuit of Lee, but he was prudent enough to avoid any specific order to McClellan assigning him to the command. He put McClellan in position to take the command to move against Lee, and McClellan, always obedient to what he believed to be his duty, availed himself of it and fought the battle of Antietam.

So far from Lincoln being unfriendly to McClellan when

he started on his spring campaign of 1862, there is the strongest evidence in support of the belief that Lincoln hoped for McClellan's success and earnestly desired him to win his way back as Commander-in-Chief of the armies. It was on March 11, 1862, that Lincoln relieved McClellan from his position of Commander-in-Chief and limited him to the command of his own immediate army, but no Commander-in-Chief was appointed until July 11, 1862. Had Lincoln intended that McClellan should never return to the command of all the armies, he certainly would have appointed Halleck Commander-in-Chief before the 11th of July. It is known that General Scott, when he retired from the command, desired the appointment of Halleck as his successor, and McClellan himself was in doubt for some weeks whether he or Halleck would be called to the supreme command. After McClellan, Halleck was the one man to whom Lincoln turned as the most competent for Commander-in-Chief, but he delayed filling the position not only until after the disastrous close of the Peninsula campaign, but for two weeks after McClellan's insulting letter to Stanton and four days after McClellan's offensive political letter handed to the President at Harrison's Landing. It was not until McClellan had proclaimed himself a political as well as a military general on the 7th of July, 1862, that Lincoln abandoned all hope of McClellan ever regaining the position of Commander-in-Chief, and four days thereafter he called Halleck to that task. I many times heard Lincoln discuss McClellan. I do not mean that he usually or even at any time expressed fully his views as to McClellan, but I have reason to know that with all the troubles he had with him about moving in the early part of 1862 and about the Peninsula campaign, he sincerely and earnestly hoped that McClellan would capture Richmond and thus reinstate himself as Commander-in-Chief of the armies, with his laurels fairly won and his ability to maintain them clearly demonstrated.

If Lincoln had been capable of resentment against Mc-

Clellan or against any of his military leaders, many heads would have fallen that were saved by Lincoln's patience and generosity. He knew that McClellan and more than one other general had at times listened to the whispers of a military dictatorship. McClellan states, on page 152 of his own book, that Stanton once urged him to arrest Secretary Cameron for inciting to insubordination by making an Abolition speech to a newly-arrived regiment, and he adds: "He (Stanton) often advocated the propriety of my seizing the government and taking affairs in my own hands." In a letter to his wife, dated August 9, 1861, also published in his own volume, page 85, McClellan refers to the fact that he is earnestly pressed by letter after letter and conversation after conversation to save the nation by assuming the powers of the President as dictator. Writing in the free confidence of a devoted husband to a devoted wife, he said: "As I hope one day to be united with you for ever in heaven I have no such aspiration. I would cheerfully take the dictatorship and agree to lay down my life when the country is saved." Had Lincoln been jealous of McClellan's power, he had ample opportunity to relieve him from command long before he did, but he never feared those who prattled about the dictatorship, although well informed of the many, including some prominent generals, who had advised it. His generosity to military men who committed such follies is clearly exhibited in his letter of January 26, 1863, to General Hooker, notifying him of his assignment to the command of the Army of the Potomac. Hooker was one of those who had believed in a military dictatorship, and Lincoln believed that Hooker had not given cordial support to General Burnside when he was in command of the army. To use Lincoln's own plain language, he told Hooker that he had done "a great wrong to the country and to a most meritorious and honorable brother-officer." He then said to Hooker: "I have heard, in such a way as to believe it, of your recently saying that both the army and the government needed a dictator. Of course it was not for this,

but in spite of it, that I have given you the command. Only those generals who gain successes can be dictators. What I now ask of you is military success, and I will risk the dictatorship." Thus did Lincoln assign Hooker to the command of the Army of the Potomac when he knew that Hooker had been guilty of the failure to support his commanding officer in important military movements, and that he had advised a dictator to usurp the prerogatives of the President. He believed McClellan to be in political sympathy with the men who were most implacably hostile to his administration, but he was sagacious enough to know that military success under any general of his appointment would give political success to the administration; and I am certain that he would have preferred McClellan as the conqueror of Richmond in 1862, and would gladly have restored him to the command of all the armies, knowing that the victory would have been as much the victory of Lincoln as the victory of McClellan.

I saw Lincoln many times during the campaign of 1864, when McClellan was his competitor for the Presidency. I never heard him speak of McClellan in any other than terms of the highest personal respect and kindness. He never doubted McClellan's loyalty to the government or to the cause that called him to high military command. But he did believe, until after the capture of Atlanta by Sherman and Sheridan's victories in the Valley, which settled the political campaign in favor of Lincoln, that McClellan was quite likely to be elected over him, and that if elected, with all his patriotism and loyalty to the Union, he would be powerless to prevent the dissolution of the Republic. The convention that nominated McClellan for President met only a few days before Sherman captured Atlanta. There had been no important victories for any of the Union armies until that time during the year 1864, and there had been great sacrifice of life in both Sherman's and Grant's campaigns. The convention that nominated McClellan voiced the sentiment that regarded the war as a failure, and it was so declared in the

platform in the clearest terms, with the call for a suspension of hostilities because of the failure to obtain peace by force of arms. Lincoln believed that McClellan, if elected, would be coerced into a policy of humiliating peace and the loss of all the great issues for which so much blood and treasure had been sacrificed. But that he ever cherished the semblance of resentment against McClellan, even when McClellan was offensively insubordinate as a military man and equally offensive in assuming to define the political policy of the administration, I do not for a moment believe. Had McClellan understood Lincoln half as well as Lincoln understood McClellan, there never would have been serious discord between them. It was the creation of what I believe to be McClellan's entirely unwarranted distrust of Lincoln's personal and official fidelity to him as a military commander, and that single error became a seething cauldron of woe to both of them and a consuming misfortune to McClellan.

Lincoln's position in history is secure, but it is doubtful whether the impartial historian of the future will give McClellan his full measure of justice. History records results—only achievements and failures. It will tell of McClellan that he was an unsuccessful military chieftain, and that on his own record in an appeal to the country he was the most overwhelmingly defeated candidate for President in the history of the present great parties of the nation; but no truthful historian can fail to say of him that he was one of the great military geniuses of his day, one of the purest of patriots, and one of the most loyal of men in the great battle for the preservation of the Union.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

LINCOLN AND GRANT

ABRAHAM LINCOLN and Ulysses S. Grant were entire strangers to each other personally until the 9th of March, 1864, when Lincoln handed Grant his commission as Lieutenant-General, which made him three days later Commander-in-Chief of all the armies of the Union. Although Grant entered the army as a citizen of Lincoln's own state, he had resided there only a little more than a year. When he retired from the army by resignation on the 31st of July, 1854, as a captain, he selected Missouri as his home and settled on a farm near St. Louis. He had won promotion at the battles of Molino del Rey and Chapultepec in the Mexican War, and was brevetted for special gallantry. During the nearly seven years between his retirement from the army and re-entering the military service at the beginning of the civil war he had done little or nothing to make himself known to fame. He had moved from Missouri to Galena early in 1860 to improve his worldly condition by accepting a salary of \$600 from his two brothers, who were then engaged in the leather business. After remaining with them for a year his salary was advanced to \$800, and in a letter to a friend he exhibited his gratification at his business success and expressed the hope of reaching what then seemed to be his highest ambition—a partnership in the firm. His life in Galena was quiet and unobtrusive as was Grant's habit under all circumstances; and when the first call for troops was issued and Grant brought a company from Galena to Springfield without any friends to press his promo-

tion, it is not surprising that, while political colonels were turned out with great rapidity, Grant remained without a command. He served on the staff of Governor Yates for several weeks, giving him the benefit of his military experience in organizing new troops, but it does not seem to have occurred to Grant to suggest his own appointment to a command or to Governor Yates to tender him one. He returned to Galena, and on the 24th of May, 1861, sent a formal request to the Adjutant-General of the army at Washington for an assignment to military duty "until the close of the war in such capacity as may be offered." To this no reply was ever received, and a month later he made a personal visit to the headquarters of General McClellan, then in command of the Ohio volunteers at Cincinnati, hoping that McClellan would tender him a position on his staff; but he failed to meet McClellan, and returned home without suggesting to any one a desire to enter the service under the Cincinnati commander.

It was a wayward and insubordinate regiment at Springfield that called Grant back to the military service and started him on his matchless career. The Twenty-first Illinois defied the efforts of Governor Yates to reduce it to discipline, and in despair he telegraphed to the modest Captain Grant at Galena, asking him to come and accept the colonelcy. The prompt answer came: "I accept the regiment and will start immediately." It is needless to say that the appearance of a plain, ununiformed, and modest man like Grant made little impression at first upon his insubordinate command, but in a very short time he made it the best disciplined regiment from the state, and the men as proud of their commander as he was of them. The story of Grant's military achievements from Belmont to Shiloh is familiar to every reader of American history. It was Grant's capture of Fort Henry, soon followed by the capture of Fort Donelson and Nashville, that opened the second year of the war with such brilliant promise of an early overthrow of the Confederate armies. It was his sententious answer to General Buckner at Fort Donelson that

proclaimed to the nation his heroic qualities as a military commander. He said: "No terms except unconditional and immediate surrender can be accepted; I propose to move immediately upon your works." He soon became popularly known as "Unconditional Surrender Grant," and while his superior officers, including General-in-Chief McClellan and his (Grant's) immediate commander Halleck, seemed to agree only in hindering Grant in his military movements, the country profoundly appreciated his victories. Soon after the capture of Nashville he was ordered by Halleck to make a new military movement that was rendered impossible by immense floods which prevailed in the western waters. Halleck reported him to McClellan, complaining that he had left his post without leave and had failed to make reports, etc., to which McClellan replied: "Do not hesitate to arrest him at once if the good of the service requires it, and place C. F. Smith in command." Halleck immediately relieved Grant and placed Smith in command of the proposed expedition. Grant gave a temperate explanation of the injustice done to him, but as the wrong was continued he asked to be relieved from duty. In the mean time Halleck had discovered his error, and atoned for it by answering to Grant: "Instead of relieving you, I wish you, as soon as your new army is in the field, to assume the immediate command and lead it on to new victories."

It was not until after the battle of Shiloh, fought on the 6th and 7th of April, 1862, that Lincoln was placed in a position to exercise a controlling influence in shaping the destiny of Grant. The first day's battle at Shiloh was a serious disaster to the Union army commanded by Grant, who was driven from his position, which seems to have been selected without any special reference to resisting an attack from the enemy, and, although his army fought most gallantly in various separate encounters, the day closed with the field in possession of the enemy and Grant's army driven back to the river. Fortunately, the advance of Buell's army formed a junction

with Grant late in the evening, and that night all of Buell's army arrived, consisting of three divisions. The two generals arranged their plans for an offensive movement early the next morning, and, after another stubborn battle, the lost field was regained and the enemy compelled to retreat with the loss of their commander, General Albert Sidney Johnston, who had fallen early in the first day's action, and with a larger aggregate loss of killed, wounded, and missing than Grant suffered. The first reports from the Shiloh battle-field created profound alarm throughout the entire country, and the wildest exaggerations were spread in a floodtide of vituperation against Grant. It was freely charged that he had neglected his command because of dissipation, that his army had been surprised and defeated, and that it was saved from annihilation only by the timely arrival of Buell.

The few of to-day who can recall the inflamed condition of public sentiment against Grant caused by the disastrous first day's battle at Shiloh will remember that he was denounced as incompetent for his command by the public journals of all parties in the North, and with almost entire unanimity by Senators and Congressmen without regard to political faith. Not only in Washington, but throughout the loyal states, public sentiment seemed to crystallize into an earnest demand for Grant's dismissal from the army. His victories of Forts Henry and Donelson, which had thrilled the country a short time before, seemed to have been forgotten, and on every side could be heard the emphatic denunciation of Grant because of his alleged reckless exposure of the army, while Buell was universally credited with having saved it. It is needless to say that owing to the excited condition of the public mind most extravagant reports gained ready credence, and it was not uncommon to hear Grant denounced on the streets and in all circles as unfitted by both habit and temperament for an important military command. The clamor for Grant's removal, and often for his summary dismissal, from the army surged against the President from every side, and he was

harshly criticized for not promptly dismissing Grant, or at least relieving him from his command. I can recall but a single Republican member of Congress who boldly defended Grant at that time. Elihu B. Washburne, whose home was in Galena, where Grant had lived before he went into the army, stood nearly or quite alone among the members of the House in wholly justifying Grant at Shiloh, while a large majority of the Republicans of Congress were outspoken and earnest in condemning him.

I did not know Grant at that time; had neither partiality nor prejudice to influence my judgment, nor had I any favorite general who might be benefited by Grant's overthrow, but I shared the almost universal conviction of the President's friends that he could not sustain himself if he attempted to sustain Grant by continuing him in command. Looking solely to the interests of Lincoln, feeling that the tide of popular resentment was so overwhelming against Grant that Lincoln must yield to it, I had repeated conferences with some of his closest friends, including Swett and Lamon, all of whom agreed that Grant must be removed from his command, and complained of Lincoln for his manifest injustice to himself by his failure to act promptly in Grant's removal. So much was I impressed with the importance of prompt action on the part of the President after spending a day and evening in Washington that I called on Lincoln at eleven o'clock at night and sat with him alone until after one o'clock in the morning. He was, as usual, worn out with the day's exacting duties, but he did not permit me to depart until the Grant matter had been gone over and many other things relating to the war that he wished to discuss. I pressed upon him with all the earnestness I could command the immediate removal of Grant as an imperious necessity to sustain himself. As was his custom, he said but little, only enough to make me continue the discussion until it was exhausted. He sat before the open fire in the old Cabinet room, most of the time with his feet up on the high marble mantel,

and exhibited unusual distress at the complicated condition of military affairs. Nearly every day brought some new and perplexing military complication. He had gone through a long winter of terrible strain with McClellan and the Army of the Potomac; and from the day that Grant started on his southern expedition until the battle of Shiloh he had had little else than jarring and confusion among his generals in the West. He knew that I had no ends to serve in urging Grant's removal, beyond the single desire to make him be just to himself, and he listened patiently.

I appealed to Lincoln for his own sake to remove Grant at once, and in giving my reasons for it I simply voiced the admittedly overwhelming protest from the loyal people of the land against Grant's continuance in command. I could form no judgment during the conversation as to what effect my arguments had upon him beyond the fact that he was greatly distressed at this new complication. When I had said everything that could be said from my standpoint, we lapsed into silence. Lincoln remained silent for what seemed a very long time. He then gathered himself up in his chair and said in a tone of earnestness that I shall never forget: "*I can't spare this man; he fights.*" That was all he said, but I knew that it was enough, and that Grant was safe in Lincoln's hands against his countless hosts of enemies. The only man in all the nation who had the power to save Grant was Lincoln, and he had decided to do it. He was not influenced by any personal partiality for Grant, for they had never met, but he believed just what he said—"I can't spare this man; he fights." I knew enough of Lincoln to know that his decision was final, and I knew enough of him also to know that he reasoned better on the subject than I did, and that it would be unwise to attempt to unsettle his determination. I did not forget that Lincoln was the one man who never allowed himself to appear as wantonly defying public sentiment. It seemed to me impossible for him to save Grant without taking a crushing load of condemnation upon himself; but Lincoln was wiser than

all those around him, and he not only saved Grant, but he saved him by such well-concerted effort that he soon won popular applause from those who were most violent in demanding Grant's dismissal.

The method that Lincoln adopted to rescue Grant from the odium into which he had, to a very large degree, unjustly fallen was one of the bravest and most sagacious acts of his administration. Halleck was commander of the military division consisting of Missouri, Kentucky, Tennessee, and possibly other states, but he remained at his headquarters in St. Louis until after the battle of Shiloh. Lincoln's first move was to bring Halleck to the field, where he at once superseded Grant as commander of the army. This relieved public apprehension and soon calmed the inflamed public sentiment that was clamoring for Grant's dismissal. Lincoln knew that it would require time for the violent prejudice against Grant to perish, and he calmly waited until it was safe for him to give some indication to the country of his abiding faith in Grant as a military commander. Halleck reached the army at Pittsburg Landing on the 11th of April, four days after the battle had been fought, and of course his presence on the field at once made him the commanding officer. On the 30th of April, when the public mind was reasonably well prepared to do justice to Grant, an order was issued assigning him "as second in command under the major-general commanding the department."

This was an entirely needless order so far as mere military movements were involved, and it is one of the very rare cases in the history of the war in which such an order was issued. Only under very special circumstances could there be any occasion for an order assigning a particular general as second in command of an army. While the army is within reach of orders from the commanding general there can be no second in command. In case of his death or inability to take active command in battle, the military laws wisely regulate the succession, and only in extraordinary cases is it departed from.

In this case the purpose of it was obvious. Lincoln had quieted public apprehension by bringing General Halleck to the field and thus relieving Grant of command without the semblance of reproach; but he desired to impress the country with his absolute faith in Grant as a military leader, and it was for that reason that the special order was issued assigning him as second in command of Halleck's army. The effect of that order was precisely what Lincoln anticipated. It made all loyal men take pause and abate or yield their violent hostility to Grant in obedience to the publicly expressed confidence of Lincoln. The country knew that Lincoln best understood Grant, and from the date of Grant's assignment as second in command of the army the prejudice against him rapidly perished. It was thus that Lincoln saved Grant from one of the most violent surges of popular prejudice that was ever created against any of our leading generals, and on the 11th of July, when it was entirely safe to restore Grant to his command for active operations, Halleck was ordered to Washington by Lincoln and assigned as commander-in-chief. Thus was Grant restored to the command of the army that he had lost at the battle of Shiloh, and it was Lincoln, and Lincoln alone, who saved him from disgrace and gave to the country the most lustrous record of all the heroes of the war.

I doubt whether Grant ever understood how Lincoln, single and alone, protected him from dishonor in the tempest of popular passion that came upon him after the disaster at Shiloh. Grant never was in Washington until he was summoned there early in 1864 to be commissioned as Lieutenant-General, and he was entirely without personal acquaintance with Lincoln. After he became Commander-in-Chief he made his headquarters in the field with the Army of the Potomac, and was very rarely in Washington after he crossed the Rappahannock and opened the campaign by the battles of the Wilderness. That he frequently saw Lincoln between February and May while perfecting his plans for army movements is well known, but Grant was one of the most silent of men and most

of all reluctant to talk about himself, while Lincoln was equally reserved in all things pertaining to himself personally. Especially where he had rendered any service to another he would be quite unlikely to speak of it himself. Judging the two men from their chief and very marked characteristics, it is entirely reasonable to assume that what Lincoln did to save Grant from disgrace was never discussed or referred to by them in personal conversation. Grant never, in any way known to the public, recognized any such obligation to Lincoln, and no utterance ever came from him indicating anything more than the respect for Lincoln due from a general to his chief.

I never heard Lincoln allude to the subject but once, and that was under very painful circumstances and when the subject was forced upon him by myself. Lincoln knew that I had personal knowledge of his heroic effort to rescue Grant from the odium that came upon him after Shiloh, and an accidental occasion arose in the latter part of October, 1864, when his relations to Grant became a proper subject of consideration. The October elections in 1864, when Lincoln was a candidate for re-election, resulted favorably for the Republicans in Ohio and Indiana, but unfavorably for them in Pennsylvania. There was no state ticket to be elected in Pennsylvania that year, and the vote for Congress and local officers gave a small Democratic majority on the home vote in the state. McClellan, a native of Pennsylvania, was the Democratic candidate for President, and state pride naturally added to his strength. Simon Cameron was chairman of the Republican State Committee. He was well equipped for the position, but was so entirely confident of success that he neglected to perfect the organization necessary to gain the victory, and the prestige of success fell to McClellan. New York was regarded as extremely doubtful, and there was much concern felt about the possibility of New York and Pennsylvania both voting against Lincoln in November. It was not doubted that the army vote would give Pennsylvania to

Lincoln, but it was of the utmost importance, to give moral force and effect to the triumph, to give Lincoln a majority on the home vote. Lincoln was much concerned about the situation, and telegraphed me to come to Washington the day after the October election. I went on at once, and after going over the political situation carefully, Lincoln asked me whether I would be willing to give my personal services to aid the state committee during the month intervening between the October and November elections. I reminded him that Cameron and I were not in political sympathy, and that he would regard it as obtrusive for me to volunteer assistance to him in the management of the campaign. To this Lincoln replied: "Of course, I understand that, but if Cameron shall invite you can you give your time fully to the contest?" I answered that I would gladly do so. He did not suggest how he meant to bring about co-operation between Cameron and myself, but I knew him well enough to know that he would be very likely to accomplish the desired result. Two days thereafter I received a cordial letter from Cameron inviting me to join him at the headquarters and assist in the November contest.

I at once went to Philadelphia, and found Wayne MacVeagh already with Cameron in obedience to a like invitation that had been brought about by Lincoln. MacVeagh had been chairman of the state committee the previous year, when Curtin was re-elected, as I had been chairman in 1860 when Lincoln was first elected and both of us were at the time regarded as somewhat conspicuous among the opponents of Cameron. The failure in Pennsylvania, contrasted with the party successes in Ohio and Indiana, was very mortifying to Cameron, and he was ready to employ every available resource to redeem the state in November. There was the heartiest co-operation by MacVeagh and myself, all being done under the name and immediate direction of Cameron as chairman, and there was not a jar during the month of desperate effort to win the state for Lincoln. I took a private room at another hotel, and never was at headquarters except for confidential confer-

ence with Cameron himself; and, as requested by Lincoln, I wrote him fully every night my impressions of the progress we were making. The Democrats were highly elated by their rather unexpected success in October, and they made the most desperate and well-directed battle to gain the state for McClellan. So anxious was Lincoln about the campaign that after I had been a week in co-operation with the state committee, he sent Postmaster-General William Dennison over to Philadelphia specially to talk over the situation more fully than it could be presented in my letters, and to return the same night and make report to him. It was evident that we had gained nothing, and I so informed the Postmaster-General, and expressed great doubts as to our ability to do more than hold our own, considering the advantage the Democrats had in the prestige of their October victory. I told him, however, that in another week the question could be determined whether we were safe on the home vote of Pennsylvania, and that if there was reasonable doubt about it I would notify Lincoln and visit Washington.

A week later, as I had advised Lincoln from day to day, I saw nothing to warrant the belief that we had gained any material advantage in the desperate battle, and I telegraphed Lincoln that I would see him at ten o'clock that night. I found him waiting, and he exhibited great solicitude as to the battle in Pennsylvania. He knew that his election was in no sense doubtful, but he knew that if he lost New York and with it Pennsylvania on the home vote, the moral effect of his triumph would be broken and his power to prosecute the war and make peace would be greatly impaired. His usually sad face was deeply shadowed with sorrow when I told him that I saw no reasonable prospect of carrying Pennsylvania on the home vote, although we had about held our own in the hand-to-hand conflict through which we were passing. "Well, what is to be done?" was Lincoln's inquiry after the whole situation had been presented to him. I answered that the solution of the problem was a very simple and easy one—that

Grant was idle in front of Petersburg; that Sheridan had won all possible victories in the Valley; and that if 5000 Pennsylvania soldiers could be furloughed home from each army the election could be carried without doubt. Lincoln's face brightened instantly at the suggestion, and I saw that he was quite ready to execute it. I said to him: "Of course, you can trust Grant to make the suggestion to him to furlough 5000 Pennsylvania troops for two weeks?" To my surprise, Lincoln made no answer, and the bright face of a few moments before was instantly shadowed again. I was much disconcerted, as I supposed that Grant was the one man to whom Lincoln could turn with absolute confidence as his friend. I then said with some earnestness: "Surely, Mr. President, you can trust Grant with a confidential suggestion to furlough Pennsylvania troops?" Lincoln remained silent and evidently distressed at the proposition I was pressing upon him. After a few moments, and speaking with emphasis, I said: "It can't be possible that Grant is not your friend; he can't be such an ingrate?" Lincoln hesitated for some time, and then answered: "Well, McClure, I have no reason to believe that Grant prefers my election to that of McClellan."

I must confess that my response to this seemingly appalling statement from Lincoln was somewhat violative of the rules of courteous conversation. I reminded Lincoln how, in that room, when I had appealed to him to respect the almost universal demand of the country for Grant's dismissal, he had withstood the shock alone and interposed his omnipotence to save Grant when he was a personal stranger. Lincoln, as usual, answered intemperance of speech by silence. I then said to him: "General Meade is a soldier and a gentleman; he is the commander of the Army of the Potomac; send an order to him from yourself to furlough 5000 Pennsylvania soldiers home for two weeks, and send that order with some trusted friend from the War Department, with the suggestion to Meade that your agent be permitted to bring the order back with him." After a little reflection Lincoln answered: "I

reckon that can be done." I then said, "What about Sheridan?" At once his sad face brightened up, like the noonday sun suddenly emerging from a dark cloud, as he answered: "Oh, Phil Sheridan; he's all right." Before I left his room that night he had made his arrangements to send messengers to Meade and Sheridan. The order was sent to Meade, and he permitted it to be returned to the President, but Sheridan needed no order. The 10,000 Pennsylvania soldiers were furloughed during the week, and Lincoln carried Pennsylvania on the home vote by 5712 majority, to which the army vote added 14,363 majority. It was thus that Lincoln made his triumph in Pennsylvania a complete victory without what was then commonly called the "bayonet vote," and Lincoln carried New York by 6749, leaving McClellan the worst defeated candidate ever nominated by any of the great political parties of the country.

I left Lincoln fully convinced that Grant was an ingrate, and Lincoln certainly knew that he permitted that conviction to be formed in my mind. He did not in any way qualify his remark about Grant, although it was his custom when he felt compelled to disparage any one to present some charitable explanation of the conduct complained of. The fact that he refused to send his request to Grant, while he was willing to send it to Meade, proved that he was, for some reason, disappointed in Grant's fidelity to him; and the enthusiasm with which he spoke of Sheridan proved how highly he valued the particular quality that he did not credit to Grant. I confess that the conviction formed that day made the name of Grant leave a bad taste in my mouth for many years. I heartily supported his nomination for the Presidency in 1868,* and was chairman of the Pennsylvania delegation in the Chicago convention that nominated him, because I believed that the chivalrous victor of Appomattox would command the highest measure of confidence from the southern people and hasten the restoration of peace and business prosperity; but Grant and his immediate friends knew that while I earnestly sup-

ported his nomination and election, I did not have the confidence in him that he generally commanded. I now believe that Lincoln was mistaken in his distrust of Grant. It was not until after Grant's retirement from the Presidency that I ever had an opportunity to hear his explanation. I remembered that on election night, when Grant was advised at his headquarters in front of Petersburg of Lincoln's election, he sent Lincoln a dispatch heartily congratulating him upon his triumph. I never heard Lincoln allude to the subject again, and I am therefore ignorant as to whether his belief was ever changed.

I never visited the White House during Grant's Presidency, although twice specially invited to do so to consider what I regarded as an impracticable or impossible political suggestion, but I accidentally met him in the Continental Hotel, soon after his retirement, in company with George W. Childs. Grant came forward in the most cordial manner and thanked me for an editorial that had appeared in *The Times* on the day that ended his Presidential term, in which I had spoken of him and his achievements as history would record them, regardless of the political passions and prejudices of the day. The meeting ended with an invitation to lunch with him that afternoon at Anthony J. Drexel's office, which I accepted. There were present only Drexel, Childs, and one or two others connected with the Drexel house. After luncheon all dispersed but Grant, Childs, and myself, and we had a most delightful conversation with Grant for an hour or more. I was anxious to learn, if possible, what Grant's feelings were in the Presidential battle of 1864. Without intimating to him that Lincoln had doubted his fidelity, I reminded him that he had maintained such a silent attitude that some of Lincoln's closest friends were at a loss to know his preference in the contest. He answered very promptly that he supposed none could have doubted his earnest desire for the re-election of Lincoln, although he studiously avoided any expression, public or private, on the subject. He said: "It would have

been obviously unbecoming on my part to have given a public expression against a general whom I had succeeded as Commander-in-Chief of the army." I do not doubt that Grant declared the exact truth in that statement. Naturally silent and averse to any expressions whatever on politics, he felt that he could not with propriety even appear to assail a man who had failed and fallen in the position that he had won and maintained. Thus for twelve years I cherished a personal prejudice against Grant because of his supposed want of fidelity to Lincoln that I now believe to have been wholly unjust. One revelation to me at the meeting with Grant at the Drexel luncheon was his remarkable and attractive powers as a conversationalist. He discussed politics during his term and the politics of the future, public men and public events, with great freedom and in a manner so genial as to amaze me. I had shared the common impression that Grant was always reticent, even in the circle of his closest friends, but the three hours spent with him on that day proved that when he chose he could be one of the most entertaining of men in the social circle.

It is evident that from the day that Grant became Commander-in-Chief, Lincoln had abiding faith in him. He yielded implicitly to Grant's judgment in all matters purely military; Grant, like all great soldiers, yielded as implicitly to Lincoln in all matters relating to civil administration, and the annals of history will testify that Grant fulfilled every expectation of the government and of the loyal people of the nation as military chieftain. Many have criticised some of his military movements, such as his assaults at Vicksburg and Cold Harbor and his battles in the Wilderness, but he met the great need of the country and was as heroic in peace as in war. When President Johnson attempted to punish Lee for treason, Grant not only admonished the President, but notified him that "the officers and men paroled at Appomattox Court-House, and since upon the same terms given to Lee, cannot be tried for treason so long as they preserve the terms

of their parole"; and he went so far as to declare that he would resign his commission if the government violated the faith he had given when Lee surrendered to him. He fought more battles and won more victories than any general of any country during his generation, until his death on the 23rd of July, 1885.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

LINCOLN AND SHERMAN

ABRAHAM LINCOLN and William T. Sherman had never met until Sherman came to Washington to visit his brother, the present Senator John Sherman, ten days after Lincoln's inauguration. Sherman's mission to the capital was not to obtain a command. He had resigned as president of a military institute in Louisiana, because, as he frankly said to the state officials who controlled the institution, he could not remain and owe allegiance to a state that had withdrawn from the Union. In his letter of resignation, dated January 18, 1861, he said: "Should Louisiana withdraw from the Federal Union, I prefer to maintain my allegiance to the Constitution as long as a fragment of it survives, and my longer stay here would be a wrong in every sense of the word." He left New Orleans about the 1st of March to make his home in the North. Like Grant, he tendered his services to the government, but, again like Grant, his offer was not answered. His first meeting with Lincoln was in company with his Senator brother to pay a brief visit of courtesy to the President. After the Senator had transacted some political business with Lincoln, he turned to his brother and said: "Mr. President, this is my brother, Colonel Sherman, who is just up from Louisiana; he may give you some information you want." To this Lincoln replied, as reported by Sherman himself: "Ah! How are they getting along down there?" Sherman answered: "They think they are getting along swimmingly; they are prepared for war." To which Lincoln responded: "Oh, well,

I guess we'll manage to keep house." Sherman records in his *Memoirs* that he was "sadly disappointed," and that he "broke out on John, damning the politicians generally," saying: "You have got things in a hell of a fix; you may get them out as best you can." Sherman then, as ever, was ruggedly honest and patriotic, and often more impressive than elegant in his manner of speech. Some old St. Louis friends had obtained for him the presidency of a street-railway of that city at a salary of \$2500. Speaking of this position, he says: "This suited me exactly, and I answered Turner that I would accept with thanks."

Before Sherman was comfortably installed in his position as a street-railway president, Postmaster-General Montgomery Blair telegraphed him, on the 6th of April, asking him to accept a chief clerkship in the War Department, with the assurance that he would be made Assistant Secretary of War when Congress met. Sherman answered with the laconic dispatch: "I cannot accept." In a letter written at the same time to Blair he says that after his visit to Washington, where he saw no chance of employment, he had gone to St. Louis, accepted an official position and established his home, and that he was not at liberty to change. He added that he was thankful for the compliment, and that he wished "the administration all success in its almost impossible task of governing this distracted and anarchical people." A few days thereafter General Frank Blair called on Sherman and said that he was authorized to select a brigadier-general to command the Department of Missouri, and he tendered the position to Sherman, who declined it, and General Lyon was then appointed. Feeling, however, as the clouds of war darkened upon the country, that his services might be needed, on the 8th of May Sherman addressed a formal letter to the Secretary of War, again tendering his services to the government, and on the 14th of the same month he was appointed colonel of the Thirteenth regiment of regulars. On the 20th of June he reported at

Washington in obedience to orders from General Scott, who assigned him to inspection duty; and before the movement was made to Manassas, Sherman was ordered to the command of a brigade of Hunter's division, and in that position was in the first battle of the war.

Sherman was one of the very few generals who seldom grieved Lincoln. While he was one of the most voluminous of writers on every phase of the war and every question arising from it, he never assumed to be wiser than the government, and he never committed a serious blunder. He had the most profound contempt for politicians in and out of the army, and for political methods generally, and his bluntness of both manner and expression emphasized his views and purposes so that none could misunderstand them. Naturally impulsive, he often felt keenly the many complications which surrounded all great generals, and he spoke and wrote with unusual freedom, but always within the clearest lines of military subordination. He was an earnest, ardent, outspoken patriot, and had more controversy than any other general with the single exception of McClellan; but I doubt whether there is a single important utterance of Sherman's during the four long years of war, when new and grave problems had to be met and solved from time to time, that he would have recalled in the later years of his life. He had learned to cherish the most profound respect for Lincoln, although they never met after his first introduction to the President during the early period of the war, until the spring of 1865 at City Point, Va., after Sherman had made his march to the sea and his great campaign had practically ended at Raleigh, North Carolina.

There is no doubt that Lincoln's earliest impressions of Sherman were quite as unfavorable to Sherman as were Sherman's early impressions of Lincoln. It was not until Sherman had been assigned to Kentucky, along with General Anderson, that he attracted the attention of the country. Along with a number of others he had won his star at Bull Run, and

on the 24th of August he was sent with Anderson to Louisville. Anderson's feeble health soon demanded that he should be relieved, and Sherman was thus left in command. The position of Kentucky was a most delicate and important one. Sherman succeeded to the command on the 8th of October, and within a few weeks thereafter it was whispered throughout Washington that he was a lunatic. This belief was accepted in most if not all military circles at the capital, and was doubtless shared by Lincoln himself, as in little more than two months after Sherman had assumed command in Kentucky he was ordered to report at Benton Barracks, St. Louis, and General Buell was assigned as his successor. The attitude of Kentucky attracted very general interest throughout the country, and the repeated changes of commanders caused great solicitude. I remember calling on Colonel Thomas A. Scott, Assistant Secretary of War, on the day that the announcement was made of Sherman's transfer to Missouri and Buell's appointment to Kentucky, and asking him what it meant. Scott answered: "Sherman's gone in the head"; and upon inquiry I found that Scott simply voiced the general belief of those who should have been best informed on the subject. Reports were published in all the leading newspapers of the country speaking of Sherman as mentally unbalanced, and it naturally mortified the blunt, straightforward soldier to the last degree. General Halleck, in a letter to McClellan asking for more officers, said: "I am satisfied that General Sherman's physical and mental system is so completely broken by labor and care as to render him, for the present, unfit for duty. Perhaps a few weeks' rest may restore him." But it is only just to Sherman, to say that the chief reason for the military authorities in Washington assuming that he was a lunatic was his report soon after assuming command in Kentucky, stating that it would require an army of 60,000 men to hold Kentucky and 200,000 men to open the Mississippi and conquer the rebellion in the Southwest. This was at that time regarded as conclusive evidence of his insanity, and his mental

condition was a matter of almost daily discussion in the public journals, with Halstead's Cincinnati *Commercial*, published in Sherman's own state, leading the attack against his mental capacity.

When Secretary Cameron and Adjutant-General Thomas were returning from their investigation of General Fremont's department, soon after Sherman had assumed command of Kentucky, Sherman took special measures to prevail upon Cameron to stop over in Louisville and personally inquire into the condition of that state. Cameron did so, and had a confidential conference with Sherman at the Galt House, in which Sherman said to Cameron that for the purpose of defense in Kentucky he should have 60,000 men, and for offensive movements 200,000 would be necessary. Cameron's answer, as reported by Sherman himself, was: "Great God! where are they to come from?" That demand of Sherman's convinced Cameron that Sherman was mentally unbalanced, and on his return to Washington he united with all the military authorities of that day in ridiculing Sherman's demand. Those who have distinct recollections of the war, as well as every intelligent reader of its history, need not now be reminded that Sherman was the only military man of that day who thoroughly and accurately appreciated the situation in the Southwest, and that his original estimate of the forces necessary to overthrow the rebellion in that section of the country is proved to have been substantially correct. Buell, who succeeded Sherman in command of Kentucky, had nearly 60,000* men when he was ordered to Grant at Shiloh, and fully 200,000 men were reapers in the harvest of death before the rebellion was conquered in the Southwest and the Father of Waters again "went unvexed to the sea."

Sherman was not permitted to take the field until after the capture of Forts Henry and Donelson and the city of Nashville. From December 23, 1861, to the 13th of February,

* Buell's army actually numbered about 71,000.—Ed.

1862, he was in charge of the St. Louis barracks as military instructor. He was first ordered from St. Louis to take command of the post at Paducah, Kentucky, where he remained until the 10th of March, when he was placed in command of a division and ordered to join Grant for the Shiloh campaign. It will be remembered that he exhibited great skill and courage as a general during the disastrous first day at Shiloh. That was the first action in which Sherman had an opportunity to prove his ability as a military commander, and it is safe to say that from that day until the close of the war Grant regarded him as the best lieutenant in his entire army. He was with Grant at Vicksburg, shared Grant's victory at Missionary Ridge, and when the Atlanta campaign was determined upon in the spring of 1864 there was no question in military circles as to the pre-eminent fitness of Sherman to take the command. His campaign from Chattanooga to Atlanta was one of the most brilliant of all the campaigns of the war. It exhibited the most accomplished military strategy coupled with the wisest direction of an army that had to contend with an enemy always intrenched and to fight every battle under the greatest disadvantages. Many even of our successful military campaigns have been severely criticised, but I doubt whether any intelligent military man at home or abroad has ever found fault with Sherman's generalship in his Atlanta campaign. With all his natural impetuosity of temper, he was always clear-headed and abundant in caution when charged with the command of an army. In his march to Atlanta he was passing through a country that was, to use his own language, "one vast fort," and with "at least fifty miles of connected trenches with abatis and finished batteries." With the single exception of his assault upon Johnston's lines at Kenesaw he did not meet with a serious reverse until he entered Atlanta, and it was his dispatch to Lincoln, announcing the capture of that city, that reversed the political tide of the country and assured Lincoln's re-election.

Sherman's march to the sea, that furnished the most roman-

tic story of the Civil War, was really a holiday picnic as compared with the march from Chattanooga to Atlanta. On the 12th of November, 1864, Sherman severed communications with the North, and started for Savannah with a picked army full 60,000 strong, and on the 10th of December he was in front of the Confederate defenses of Savannah. On the 13th, after the capture of Fort McAllister, he had opened communications with the Union squadron and was enabled to obtain the supplies his army so much needed. Thus for more than one entire month the country had no word whatever from General Sherman except in the vague and often greatly exaggerated reports which came from the Southern newspapers. I saw Lincoln several times during Sherman's march, and while he did not conceal his anxiety concerning him, he always frankly expressed his unbounded confidence in Sherman's ability to execute what he had undertaken. He had the strongest faith in Sherman as a military commander. On one occasion during Sherman's march, when he had been out for two or three weeks, I called at the War Department and ascertained that no word had been received from him, and that none need be expected for some days to come. I went from the War Department to the White House, and after a brief conference with Lincoln, in which Sherman was not alluded to at all, I bade him good-day and started to leave the room. Just as I reached the door he turned round and with a merry twinkling of the eye he said: "McClure, wouldn't you like to hear something from Sherman?" The inquiry electrified me at the instant, as it seemed to imply that Lincoln had some information on the subject. I immediately answered: "Yes, most of all I should like to hear from Sherman." To this Lincoln answered with a hearty laugh: "Well, I'll be hanged if I wouldn't myself." When Sherman reached Savannah, Lincoln overflowed with gratitude to him and his army. He then felt fully assured that the military power of the rebellion was hopelessly broken.

The names of Lincoln and Sherman are indissolubly linked

together in the yet continued dispute over Lincoln's original views on reconstruction, as Sherman claimed to represent them in the terms of the first surrender of Johnston to Sherman at Durham Station, North Carolina. On the 18th of April, 1865, Sherman and Johnston met at the house of Mr. Bennet to agree upon the terms for the surrender of Johnston's army. On the 12th of April Sherman had announced to his army the surrender of Lee. Two days later a flag of truce was received from Johnston proposing "to stop the further effusion of blood and devastation of property," and suggesting that the civil authorities of the states be permitted "to enter into the needful arrangements to terminate the existing war." Sherman's answer of the same date said: "I am fully empowered to arrange with you any terms for the suspension of further hostilities between the armies commanded by you and those commanded by myself." An interview with Johnston having been arranged by a staff officer, Sherman started from Raleigh on the 17th to fill the appointment with Johnston. When he was about to enter the car he was stopped by a telegraph-operator, who gave him the startling information of the assassination of Lincoln on the 14th. He gave orders that no publicity should be given to the death of Lincoln, and he did not even inform the staff officers accompanying him. As soon as he was alone with Johnston he communicated to him the fact of Lincoln's assassination, and he adds that "the perspiration came out in large drops on his (Johnston's) forehead, and he did not attempt to conceal his distress." This conference with Johnston did not result in formulating the terms of surrender. Johnston did not assume to possess authority to surrender all the various armies yet in the field, but as Jefferson Davis, with Breckenridge, his Secretary of War, and Reagan, his Postmaster-General, was within reach of Johnston, he proposed to meet Sherman on the following day, when he hoped to have authority to surrender the entire Confederate armies remaining in the service. When they met again Breckenridge was with Johnston

without assuming to act in any official capacity, and the terms of surrender were formulated and signed by Sherman and Johnston. So far as the purely military terms were involved, they were practically the same as those agreed to by Grant and Lee at Appomattox. The third article of the basis of agreement provided for "the recognition by the Executive of the United States of the several State governments on their officers and legislatures taking the oath prescribed by the Constitution of the United States." The fifth article provided for substantial amnesty, so far as in the power of the President, to all who accepted the terms of surrender, who should be protected in "their political rights and franchise as well as their rights of person and property." It was provided also that the armies of Sherman and Johnston should refrain from all warlike movements until the terms of surrender were finally accepted, and in the event of failure forty-eight hours' notice should be given by either side for the resumption of hostilities. Sherman transmitted the agreement to the government through Grant, and Stanton published the disapproval by the administration with most offensive reflections upon Sherman.

But for the dispute that arose over Sherman's original terms of surrender with Johnston, Lincoln's views as to reconstruction would never have been crystallized in history. The fact that Sherman claimed to act under the direct authority of Lincoln in the terms he gave to Johnston and to the civil governments of the insurgent states brings up the question directly as to Lincoln's contemplated method of closing the war; and it is notable that many of Lincoln's biographers have injected partisan prejudice into history and have studiously attempted to conceal Lincoln's ideas as to the restoration of the Union. Whether he was right or wrong, it is due to the truth of history that his convictions be honestly presented. The plain question to be considered is this: Did or did not Lincoln expressly suggest to Sherman the terms he gave to Johnston in his original agreement of surrender? If he did,

it clearly portrays Lincoln's purposes as to reconstruction and fully vindicates Sherman. If he did not thus suggest and instruct Sherman, then Sherman is a deliberate falsifier; and who is prepared to doubt the integrity of any positive statement made by William T. Sherman? There were four persons present at the conference held at City Point on the 28th of March, 1865. They were Lincoln, Grant, Sherman, and Admiral Porter. It was before these men that Lincoln freely discussed the question of ending the war, and in Sherman's *Memoirs* he says: "Mr. Lincoln was full and frank in his conversation, assuring me that in his mind he was all ready for the civil reorganization of affairs at the South as soon as the war was over." Had Lincoln stopped with the general assurance of his purpose to restore the South to civil government, it might be plausible to assume that Sherman misinterpreted his expressions, but Sherman adds the following positive statement: "He (Lincoln) distinctly authorized me to assure Governor Vance and the people of North Carolina that as soon as the rebel armies laid down their arms and resumed their civil pursuits they would at once be guaranteed all their rights as citizens of a common country; and that to avoid anarchy the State governments then in existence, with their civil functionaries, would be recognized by him as the governments de facto till Congress could provide others." There was no possibility for Sherman to mistake this expression of Lincoln. He was distinctly instructed to assure the governor of North Carolina, the state in which Sherman's army was then operating, that upon the surrender of the insurgent forces all would be guaranteed their rights as citizens, and the civil governments then in existence would be recognized by Lincoln. There was no chance for misunderstanding on this point. Either Lincoln thus instructed Sherman or Sherman states what is deliberately untrue.

These were the last instructions that Sherman received from Lincoln or from the government until the surrender of Johnston. In a little more than two weeks thereafter

Lincoln was assassinated, and the only event that could have been regarded as an additional guide for Sherman was the surrender of Lee, in which all the rights that Sherman accorded to Johnston's army were given to Lee's army by Grant. The testimony of Lincoln could not be had after the issue was raised with Sherman, as Lincoln was then dead; but Sherman knew that on the 6th of April, Lincoln had authorized the reconvening of the Virginia Legislature, and thus felt sure that Lincoln was doing in Virginia precisely what he had instructed Sherman to do in North Carolina. Grant, always reticent in matters of dispute except when testimony was a necessity, was not called upon to express any opinion as to the correctness of Sherman's understanding of Lincoln's instructions. General Badeau, who was with Grant at the time he received Stanton's offensive revocation of the agreement between Sherman and Johnston, says that Grant pronounced Stanton's ten reasons for rejecting the terms of surrender to be "infamous." An entirely new condition had been produced by the murder of Lincoln and the succession of Johnson, and had Sherman been advised of the frenzy of public sentiment that followed the assassination of the President, he probably would not have obeyed Lincoln's instructions by giving the promise that the government would recognize the Confederate civil authorities of the states.

The tragic death of Lincoln aroused public sentiment to the highest point of resentment. The new President was ostentatious in his demand for vengeance upon the Southern leaders. Stanton was most violent in his cry for the swiftest retribution, and it was in this changed condition of sentiment and of authority that Sherman's terms, accorded to Johnston in obedience to the peaceful purposes of Lincoln, were sent to the government for approval or rejection. Stanton immediately proclaimed the rejection of the terms of surrender in a dispatch given to the public press, in which he denounced Sherman with unmingled ferocity as having acted without authority and surrendered almost every issue for which the

war had been fought. So violent was this assault upon Sherman from Stanton that soon after, when Sherman's victorious army was reviewed in Washington by the President and Secretary of War, Sherman refused the proffered hand of Stanton before the multitude. President Johnson subsequently assured Sherman that Stanton's public reflection upon him had not been seen by the President nor any of Stanton's associates of the Cabinet until it had been published. Admiral Porter, who was the remaining witness to the instructions received by Sherman, took down notes immediately after the conference ended, and within a year thereafter he furnished Sherman a statement of what had occurred, in which he fully and broadly sustained Sherman as to Lincoln's instructions. I assume, therefore, that it is true beyond all reasonable dispute that Sherman in his original terms of Johnston's surrender in North Carolina implicitly obeyed the directions of Lincoln, and was therefore not only fully justified in what he did, but would have been false to his trust had he insisted upon any other terms than those he accepted.

This issue made with General Sherman and feebly sustained by a few partisan historians of the time has led intelligent students to study carefully Lincoln's ideas of reconstruction, and they should be correctly understood to correctly estimate Lincoln's character. I frequently saw Lincoln during the summer and fall of 1864 and winter of 1865. Some time in August, 1864, I spent several hours with him alone in the White House, when he spoke most earnestly about the closing of the war. He had but a single purpose, and that was the speedy and cordial restoration of the dis-severed states. He cherished no resentment against the South, and every theory of reconstruction that he ever conceived or presented was eminently peaceful and looking solely to re-attaching the estranged people to the government. I was startled when he first suggested that it would be wise to pay the South \$400,000,000 as compensation for the abolition of slavery, but he had reasoned well on the subject, and none

could answer the arguments he advanced in favor of such a settlement of the war. He knew that he could not then propose it to Congress or to the country, but he clung to it until the very last. He repeatedly renewed the subject in conversations when I was present, and on the 5th of February, 1865, he went so far as to formulate a message to Congress, proposing the payment of \$400,000,000 for emancipation, and submitted it to his Cabinet, only to be unanimously rejected. Lincoln sadly accepted the decision of his Cabinet, and filed away the manuscript message with this indorsement thereon, to which his signature was added: "February 5, 1865. To-day these papers, which explain themselves, were drawn up and submitted to the Cabinet and unanimously disapproved by them." When the proposed message was disapproved Lincoln soberly asked: "How long will the war last?" To this none could make answer, and he added: "We are spending now in carrying on the war \$3,000,000 a day, which will amount to all this money, besides all the lives."

At Lincoln's conference with Sherman and Grant at City Point on the 28th of March he exhibited profound sorrow at the statement of these generals that another great battle would probably have to be fought before closing the war. Sherman says that "Lincoln exclaimed more than once that there had been blood enough shed, and asked us if another battle could not be avoided." His great desire was to attain peace without the sacrifice of a single life that could be saved, and he certainly desired that there should be no policy of retribution upon the Southern people. He intimated to Sherman very broadly that he desired Jefferson Davis to escape from the country. Sherman in his *Memoirs* repeats a story told by Lincoln to him illustrative of his wish that Davis should escape "unknown to him"; and in discussing the same subject in the White House in the presence of Governor Curtin, Colonel Forney, several others, and myself, he told the same story to illustrate the same point, obviously intending to convey very clearly his wish that the Southern leaders

should escape from the land and save him the grave complications which must follow their arrest. Secretary Welles, in an article in the *Galaxy*, quotes Lincoln as saying on this subject: "No one need expect he would take any part in hanging or killing these men, even the worst of them. Frighten them out of the country; open the gates; let down the bars, scare them off. Enough lives have been sacrificed; we must extinguish our resentments if we expect harmony and union."

Lincoln's greatest apprehension during the last six months of the war was that the South would not return to the Union and recognize the authority of the government. He knew that the military power of the rebellion was broken, but he knew that the bitterness that prevailed among the Southern people would be an almost insuperable barrier to anything like cordial reconstruction. He knew that they were impoverished, and he feared almost universal anarchy in the South when the shattered armies of the Confederacy should be broken up, and, instead of a restoration of peace and industry or anything approaching friendly relations between the Southern people and the government, he anticipated guerilla warfare, general disorder, and utter hopelessness of tranquility throughout the rebellious states. It was this grave apprehension that made Lincoln desire to close the war upon such terms as would make the Southern people and Southern soldiers think somewhat kindly of the Union to which they were brought back by force of arms. It was this apprehension that made him instruct Sherman to recognize the civil governments of the South until Congress should take action on the subject, and that made him personally authorize General Weitzel to permit the Virginia state government to reconvene, as he himself stated it, to "take measures to withdraw the Virginia troops and their support from resistance to the general government." He meant to do precisely what Sherman agreed to do in his terms with Johnston. On Lincoln's return to Washington from Weitzel's headquarters in Rich-

mond he was surprised to find that his consent to the reassembling of the Virginia state government, like his proposed message offering \$400,000,000 as compensation for slavery, was disapproved by the Cabinet, and that it was likely to be disapproved by the country. He was greatly distressed, and hesitated some time before he attempted to extricate himself from the complication. Secretary Welles, in the *Galaxy* of April, 1872, page 524, speaking of the question in the Cabinet, says: "The subject had caused general surprise, and on the part of some dissatisfaction and irritation." Stanton and Speed were especially disturbed about it, and Secretary Welles quotes Lincoln as finally saying that he "was surprised that his object and the movement had been so generally misconstrued, and under the circumstances perhaps it was best the proceeding should be abandoned."

In the meantime Lee's army had surrendered, and Lincoln was given a reasonable opportunity to stop the proposed meeting of the Virginia Legislature; and on the 12th of April he wrote to General Weitzel that as the proposed meeting had been misconstrued, and that as Grant had since captured the Virginia troops, so that they could not be withdrawn by the Virginia Legislature, his letter to Judge Campbell should be recalled and the legislature not allowed to assemble; but if any had come in pursuance of the order to allow them a safe return to their homes. In his interview with Judge Campbell and others in relation to the proposed assembling of the Virginia Legislature, Lincoln had distinctly agreed that if Virginia could be peaceably restored to the Union, confiscation should be remitted to the people. The evidence is multiplied on every side that Lincoln intended to give the Virginians exemption from all the retributory laws of war, including amnesty to all who obeyed the government, just as Sherman provided in his terms of surrender with Johnston; but he was halted in his purpose, as he was halted in his proposed compensated emancipation, by the bitter resentments of the time, which prevailed not only

in his Cabinet, but throughout the country. Had he been able to see Sherman after he had revoked the authority for the Virginia Legislature to assemble, he would doubtless have modified his instructions to him, but Lincoln never again communicated with Sherman. Two days after his revocation of the Weitzel order he was assassinated, and four days after Lincoln's assassination Sherman made his terms of surrender with Johnston. Had Lincoln been alive when Sherman's first report of Johnston's surrender was received in Washington, his experience in assenting to the reassembling of the Virginia state government would doubtless have made him disapprove the terms given to Johnston in obedience to Lincoln's instructions to Sherman; but he would have cast no reproach upon the heroic victor of Atlanta and Savannah, and would have manfully assumed his full share of responsibility for Sherman's action. What policy of reconstruction Lincoln would have adopted had he lived to complete his great work cannot now be known; but it is entirely safe to assume that, while he would have yielded to the mandatory sentiment of the nation, he would in the end have taught the country that "with malice toward none, with charity for all," he could assure the world that "government of the people by the people and for the people shall not perish from the earth."

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

LINCOLN AND CURTIN

ANDREW G. CURTIN has written the most brilliant chapters in the annals of our great civil conflict by his official record as Governor of Pennsylvania. I am not unmindful, in paying this high tribute to the great war governor of the Union, that there are many Pennsylvania names that have become memorable for their heroism in the struggle for the preservation of our free institutions. Nor am I unmindful that Pennsylvania has within her borders the great battle-field of the war, and that the names of such Pennsylvania heroes as Meade, Reynolds, and Hancock are inseparably linked with the decisive victory that gave assured safety and unsullied freedom to the Union. While Pennsylvania heroism was making itself immortal on every battle-field of the war, the civil administration of the state was more intimately involved with every issue growing out of the war than that of any other state of the Republic. Pennsylvania was second only to New York in population and physical power, and first of all in the importance of her position and in moulding the policy of the states and their relations to the parent government. Bordered by slave commonwealths from her eastern to her western lines, and more exposed to the perils of war than any of the other loyal states, her people were conservative to the utmost limits of positive loyalty to the Union. In January, 1861, when Curtin was inaugurated as governor, not a single northern state had officially defined its relations to the Union or its attitude as to the threatened civil war, and any utterance from

a state of such pre-eminent physical and political power could not but make its impression on every state of the Union, North and South.

Few of the present day can have any just appreciation of the exceptional delicacy and grave responsibility of the position of the new governor of Pennsylvania. An ill-advised utterance from him might have wantonly inflamed the war spirit of the South or chilled the loyal devotion of the North. He was called upon to define, in advance of all the other states, the position of the North when confronted by armed treason, and there were no precedents in our history to guide him. His inaugural address was prepared entirely by himself before he came to the capital to assume his most responsible trust. Before he delivered it he summoned to his council a number of the most intelligent and considerate men of both parties in the state, but after careful and dispassionate reflection upon every sentence of the document it was not substantially changed in any particular, and the highest tribute that history could pay to his statesmanship is in the fact that the position of his great state, and its relations with the general government as defined in that address, were accepted by every loyal state and vindicated alike by the loyal judgment of the nation and by the arbitrament of the sword.

Curtin stood single among the public men of Pennsylvania in 1860 as a popular leader. His strength was with the people rather than in political invention. He had made himself conspicuously known by his services as Secretary of the Commonwealth when that officer was charged with the control of the school system. It was he who first organized a distinct department to extend and elevate our schools, and he succeeded in greatly liberalizing our educational system and starting it on the high way to its present matchless advancement. As early as 1844 he had made himself known as one of the most eloquent stump-speakers of the state, and from that time until his nomination for governor in 1860 he was in the forefront of every political contest, and was greeted with boundless en-

thusiasm by his political followers wherever he appeared. When the great battle of 1860 was to be fought Pennsylvania was accepted by all as a doubtful state, and as her vote in October would be the unerring finger-board of national victory or defeat in November, it became not only a state but a national necessity for the Republicans to nominate their most available candidate to lead in that pivotal contest. The Republican people, almost as with one voice, demanded the nomination of Curtin, and there would have been no other name presented to the convention but for the peculiar political complications arising from Cameron being a candidate for President before the same convention, and bitterly hostile to Curtin. But despite the peculiar power of Cameron as an organizer and manager of political conventions, he was finally compelled to assent to Curtin's nomination without being able to obtain an earnestly united delegation in his favor for President. When Curtin was called before the convention to accept the leadership conferred upon him, he aroused the enthusiasm of that body and of his party friends throughout the state by declaring that he accepted the flag of the convention and would carry it in the front of battle from Lake Erie to the Delaware; and he grandly fulfilled his promise. He was one of the most magnetic popular speakers Pennsylvania has ever known, combining matchless wit, keen invective, and persuasive argument with singular felicity, and his towering and symmetrical form and his genial face and manner made him the most effective of all our men on the hustings. He was aggressive from the day he entered the battle until it closed with his magnificent victory that declared him governor by a majority of over thirty-two thousand.

Many circumstances combined to bring Lincoln and Curtin into the closest official and personal relations from Lincoln's nomination until his death. As I have shown in a previous chapter, the nomination of Lincoln was made possible by two men—Henry S. Lane of Indiana and Curtin of Pennsylvania. Both would have been defeated had Seward been

nominated, and Curtin's first great struggle to give himself even a winning chance in Pennsylvania was his effort to defeat the nomination of Seward at Chicago. After that had been accomplished he united with Lane to nominate Lincoln. He and Lincoln never met until Curtin received the President-elect on his way to Washington on the 22d of February, 1861, and it was at the dinner given to Lincoln by Curtin on the evening of that day that Lincoln's route was changed and he suddenly started on his memorable midnight journey to the national capital. The appointment of Cameron to the Lincoln Cabinet was regarded by Curtin as unfortunate, and would have made very strained relations between Lincoln and Curtin had not both been singularly generous in all their impulses and actions. Notwithstanding the frequent irritating complications which arose between the Secretary of War and the governor in the organization of troops in the early part of the war, there never was a shadow upon the relations of these two men. Curtin was profoundly loyal and an enthusiast in everything pertaining to the war. He was proud of his great state, and especially of the hundreds of thousands of heroes she sent to the field, and so tireless in his great work that he always commanded the sincerest affection and confidence of the President. Although often disappointed in the political action of the national administration, and at times keenly grieved personally because of political honors unworthily conferred, or withheld from those he deemed most worthy of them, he never for a moment lost sight of his paramount duty to give unfaltering support to the government in the great struggle for the maintenance of the Union.

The two men of the country who are distinctly upon record as having appreciated the magnitude of the war when it first began are General Sherman and Governor Curtin. Sherman was judged a lunatic and relieved of his command in Kentucky because he told the government the exact truth as to the magnitude of the rebellion in the Southwest and the forces necessary to overthrow it. In a little time the country

began to appreciate Sherman's military intelligence. He was finally permitted to go to the front in command of a division, and in his first battle he proved himself to be one of the most skillful and courageous of our generals. Curtin proved his appreciation of the necessities of our imperiled government by issuing his proclamation on the 25th of April, 1861, calling for twenty-five additional regiments of infantry and one of cavalry to serve for three years or during the war, in addition to the quota furnished by Pennsylvania under the President's call of April 15, 1861, summoning 75,000 three months' men to the field. This call of Curtin was made without the authority of the general government, and entirely without the knowledge of the President or Secretary of War. Pennsylvania and the whole loyal North had been cut off from all communication with the national capital for several days by treasonable rioters in Baltimore, who burned the railroad bridges and prevented all railroad or even telegraphic communication with Washington. In this grave emergency, although Pennsylvania had furnished every man called for by the government, and had offered many more than the quota, after the most careful study of the situation with General Robert Patterson and Colonel Fitz John Porter, then serving as Assistant Adjutant-General, and a number of civilians who were heartily sustaining Curtin in his arduous labors, it was decided to assume the responsibility of calling out twenty-six additional regiments for service under the general government, because it was believed by all that they would be needed as speedily as they could be obtained.

The requisition for troops made by Pennsylvania was in pursuance of the unanimous judgment of the military and civil authorities then at Harrisburg, and it was not doubted that the government would gratefully accept them. The response to Curtin's proclamation for volunteers was unexampled, and in the few days during which Harrisburg was without communication with Washington thousands of patriotic men were crowding the trains for the capital from every part

of the state to enter the military service. To the utter surprise of the Governor and the commander of the department, the first communication received from Washington after notice of this requisition for additional troops had been forwarded was a blunt refusal to receive any of the regiments under the new call; and to emphasize the attitude of the government and its appreciation of the magnitude of the war, Secretary Cameron stated in a dispatch to the Governor not only that the troops could not be received, but "that it was more important to reduce than enlarge the number." Earnest appeals were made to the President and the War Department from the Governor and General Patterson to have these troops, or at least part of them, accepted, but every such appeal was met with a positive refusal. John Sherman, Senator from Ohio, was a volunteer aide on General Patterson's staff, and he fully agreed with the authorities at Harrisburg that it was of the utmost importance to the government that the additional Pennsylvania troops be accepted. In view of his important political position and presumed influence with the President and Secretary of War, he was hurried to Washington as soon as communications were opened to make a personal appeal for the acceptance of the troops. On the 30th of May, five days after the requisition had been made, he wrote General Patterson from Washington, stating that he had entirely failed to persuade the government to accept any part of these new regiments. It was not within the power of the government to depose Governor Curtin and order him to some military barracks as a lunatic, but it could rebuke him for proposing to furnish a large number of additional troops, when, as subsequent events proved, the government had the most pressing need for them. Fortunately for the government and for the complete vindication of the broad sagacity and heroic fidelity of Curtin, he resolved to perform his duty to his State and nation regardless of the Washington authorities.

After a bitter contest, in which some prominent Republicans opposed the Governor's recommendations, a bill had

been passed by the Legislature some weeks before appropriating half a million of dollars to provide for the defense of the State, and he had issued his call for an extraordinary session of the Legislature as early as the 20th of April to meet the great issue of civil war. He revoked his proclamation for additional regiments called for by General Patterson's requisition, but much more than one-half the number called for had already volunteered, and were practically in charge of the state for organization. When the special session of the Legislature met on the 30th of April he sent an earnest message calling for the organization of the volunteers then in camp into fifteen regiments as a state corps, but to be subject to the call of the United States in any emergency. It was this brave action of Curtin that gave us the Pennsylvania Reserve Corps, whose heroism crimsoned nearly every battle-field of the Army of the Potomac. These troops were organized not only without the aid of the national government, but in defiance of its refusal to accept them and of its positive declarations that they could not and would not be needed. It was a most heroic policy on the part of Curtin. It involved a loan of \$3,000,000 when the credit of the state was severely strained, and every partisan or factional foe was inspired to opposition by the known fact that the national government declared additional troops to be entirely unnecessary. The Legislature and the people had faith in Curtin, had faith in his integrity, his patriotism, and his judgment of the nation's peril, and the bill creating a loan and organizing fifteen regiments of the Reserve Corps was passed by an overwhelming majority in both branches of the Legislature. He had around him a number of leading men of both parties who cheerfully gave their time and ceaseless labor to assist him. Among those I recall who sat in his councils by day and night to strengthen his hands by voluntary service on his staff were such men as the late Thomas A. Scott, John A. Wright, R. Biddle Roberts, Reuben C. Hale, and John B. Parker, and Craig Biddle and Joseph E. Potts. These men, as well as the military officers on

duty in Pennsylvania with General Patterson, all heartily concurred in the policy of the Governor and shared his vindication at an early day.

Even before the disastrous battle of Bull Run was fought on the 21st of July, two of the Reserve regiments were called for by the government to march to Cumberland to the relief of Colonel Wallace, and the regiments commanded by Colonel Charles J. Biddle and Colonel Simmons and a battery of artillery were on the march the same day the order was received, and soon thereafter the Tenth regiment followed. Notwithstanding the refusal to entertain the question of accepting these troops, Curtin again tendered the Reserve Corps to the government on the 18th of July, just before the battle of Bull Run, and the same day brought orders from the War Department that four regiments should be sent to Hagerstown and the remaining, exclusive of those in West Virginia, should be sent to Baltimore. These regiments were encamped at Pittsburgh, Easton, West Chester, and Harrisburg, and the governor at once ordered them to march as requested by the Washington authorities. His answer to the request to forward the troops was in these words: "All the regiments have been ordered to Harrisburg in obedience to your dispatch just received, and on arrival will be immediately forwarded to the seat of war, as previously ordered. If there is not time to muster them in at this place, mustering officers can follow them into the field." Had these troops been on the battle-field of Bull Run, as they could have been had not the government persistently refused to accept them, it would have given an overwhelming preponderance of numbers to the Union forces, and doubtless reversed the disaster of that day.* On the night of July 21st, when the government learned that the army had been routed at Bull Run, most frantic appeals were made to Curtin from the Washington authorities to hasten his troops to the front to save the na-

* This assertion is at best doubtful. What was needed at Bull Run was not so much numbers, but discipline and organization.—Ed.

tional capital, and within twenty-four hours after the retreat of McDowell's army into the Washington fortifications the welcome tread of the Pennsylvania Reserves was heard on Pennsylvania Avenue, and the panic was allayed and confidence restored by regiment after regiment of the once-rejected troops hurrying to Washington. One dispatch from the War Department thus appeals to Curtin: "Get your regiments at Harrisburg, Easton, and other points ready for immediate shipment. Lose no time in preparing. Make things move to the utmost." Another dispatch said: "To-morrow won't do for your regiments; you must have them to-night. Send them to-night. It is of the utmost importance." Another appeal to him said: "Stop the regiment at Greencastle, and send it to Washington to-night. Do not fail." Thus the war authorities that had treated with contempt the appeals of Curtin to accept the troops he had called for when cut off from the national capital, in a few months thereafter sent the most earnest appeals to him to save them from their own folly by forwarding the troops he had organized in defiance of their protest.

I speak advisedly when I say that there was not a single new phase of the war at any time that did not summon Curtin to the councils of Lincoln. He was the first man called to Washington after the surrender of Sumter, and I accompanied him in obedience to a like summons to me as chairman of the Military Committee of the Senate. Pennsylvania was to sound the keynote for all the loyal states of the North in the utterance of her loyal governor, and her action was to be the example for every other state of the Union. How grandly Curtin performed that duty is proved by the fact that he organized and furnished to the national government during the war 367,482 soldiers, and organized, in addition to that number, 87,000 for domestic defense during the same period. New duties and grave responsibilities were multiplied upon him every week, but he was always equal to them, and was a tireless enthusiast in the performance of his labors. Three times during the war was his state invaded by the enemy,

and at one time 90,000 of Lee's army, with Lee himself at their head, were within the borders of our state on their way to their Waterloo at Gettysburg.* While responding with the utmost promptness to every call of the national government, whether for troops or for moral or political support, he was most zealous in making provision for the defense of his exposed people in the border counties. He had an ample force within the State to protect the border against raids by the enemy, and would have saved Chambersburg from destruction by the vandal torch, had not his own state troops been ordered away from him to save General Hunter after his disgraceful and disastrous raid into Virginia in 1864. Hunter's vandalism had justly inflamed the South, and when he was driven across the Potomac the Pennsylvania regiments organized for the special defense of the state, being subject to orders from Washington because mustered into the United States service, passed through Chambersburg, within forty-eight hours of the period of its destruction, to join Hunter in Maryland and save him from the retribution his folly had invited. Had these Pennsylvania troops remained subject to the orders of the state authorities, they could have been in Chambersburg before McCausland reached there, and would have outnumbered him nearly three to one. Chambersburg was thus destroyed solely because of the grave emergency that called the state troops to the support of Hunter, and they were almost within sound of McCausland's guns when he opened on the defenseless people of Chambersburg at daylight on the 30th of July, 1864, before he entered the town to destroy it.

Curtin's relations with Stanton were never entirely cordial and at times embarrassing; but Lincoln always interposed when necessary, and almost invariably sustained Curtin when a vital issue was raised between them. The fact that Lincoln supported Curtin against Stanton many times greatly irri-

* Actual strength of Lee's army was not over 80,000.—Ed.

tated the Secretary of War, and doubtless intensified his bitterness against the Pennsylvania war governor. In one notable instance only, in which Curtin and Stanton were in bitter conflict, did Lincoln hesitate to sustain Curtin, but Lincoln was overruled by his military commanders and bowed to their exactions with profound reluctance. In the winter or early spring of 1864, Curtin, always alive to the interests of humanity, and feeling keenly the sorrows of the Pennsylvania soldiers who were in Southern prison-pens suffering from disease and starvation, went to Washington on three different occasions and appealed to both Stanton and Lincoln for the exchange of prisoners as the Southern commissioners proposed. We then held about 30,000 Southern prisoners, and the South held as many or more of Union soldiers, and General Grant, looking solely to military success, peremptorily refused to permit the exchange of these men, because Lee would gain nearly 30,000 effective soldiers, while most of the 30,000 Union prisoners would be unfit for service because of illness. On Curtin's third visit to Washington on that subject he was accompanied by Attorney-General William M. Meredith, and they both earnestly pressed upon the government the prompt exchange of prisoners. Stanton grew impatient and even insolent, retorting to the governor's appeal: "Do you come here in support of the government and ask me to exchange 30,000 skeletons for 30,000 well-fed men?" To which Curtin replied with all the earnestness of his humane impulses: "Do you dare to depart from the laws of humane warfare in this enlightened age of Christian civilization?" Curtin and Meredith carried their appeal to Lincoln, who shared all of Curtin's sympathies for our suffering prisoners, and who exerted himself to the utmost, only to effect a partial exchange. In 1863, when Curtin was a candidate for reelection, Stanton gave most earnest support to his cause, notwithstanding he rarely spoke of Curtin personally except with bitterness. Curtin keenly appreciated what Stanton had done, and went to Washington soon after his election with the

purpose of paying his respects to Stanton and thanking him for the hearty support he had given him. A mutual acquaintance, who knew that Curtin was in Washington to pay his respects to Stanton, happened to meet Stanton during the evening and spoke with much enthusiasm of Curtin's victory, and of his presence there to visit and thank the Secretary of War. Stanton replied in his cynical way: "Yes, Pennsylvania must be a damned loyal state to give such a victory to Curtin." This was repeated to Curtin the same evening, and the result was that Curtin's visit to the War Office was indefinitely postponed, and Stanton died without having received the thanks that Curtin had intended for him. Soon after the war was over, however, Stanton seemed to have justly appreciated Curtin, as he wrote him a voluntary and most affectionate letter, reviewing the great work he had done as governor of Pennsylvania, thanking him for his patriotism and fidelity, and offering a full apology for anything that he might have done to give him unpleasant recollections.

Lincoln played a most conspicuous part in Curtin's second nomination and re-election. So profoundly was Curtin impressed with the necessity of uniting all parties in the support of the war for the suppression of the rebellion that he was the first man to suggest his own retirement from the office of governor if the Democrats would present the name of General William B. Franklin, a gallant Pennsylvania Democratic soldier. I was present when Curtin first made this suggestion to a number of his friends, and he made it with a degree of earnestness that impressed every one. He said that it was vastly more important to thus unite the whole Democratic party with the Republicans on an honest war platform than that any party or any individual should win political success. So earnestly did he press the matter that communication was opened with a number of leading Democrats of the state, many of whom regarded the suggestion with favor and sought to accomplish it. Unfortunately for the democracy, the more Bourbon element controlled its councils and a Supreme Judge

who had declared the national conscription act unconstitutional, thereby depriving the government of the power to fill its wasted armies, was nominated for governor when the thunders of Lee's guns were heard in the Cumberland Valley and almost within hearing of the capital where the convention sat. Had Franklin been nominated by the Democrats, Curtin would have publicly declared for him, and the Republican Convention would have welcomed him as their candidate, regardless of his political faith. Failing in that movement, there seemed to be but one hopeful loyal candidate for governor—Curtin himself. He was broken in health and entirely unequal to the strain of a desperate battle. In political contests he was expected to be leader of leaders in Pennsylvania. In addition to his shattered health, there were over 70,000 of his soldiers in the field who had not then the constitutional right to vote in their camps, while the bitter factional feud between the Curtin and Cameron wings of the party seriously threatened his defeat. Curtin's greatest desire, next to the faithful fulfillment of the high responsibilities cast upon him, was to retire from public office and recover his physical vigor. It was believed in his own household that he could not survive another political campaign in which he was compelled to take the lead. His devoted and estimable wife, who brightened every public honor he attained, appealed to me with tears in her eyes to take absolute measures to retire him from the field, and the governor heartily assented if he could be permitted to retire in any way honorable to himself.

Of Curtin's renomination there was no doubt whatever if he permitted his name to be used, and it became merely a question how he could retire gracefully. Entrusted with this matter, acting entirely upon my own judgment, I went to Washington, called upon Colonel John W. Forney and told him my mission. I said: "Senator Cameron will desire the retirement of Curtin because he is his enemy; I desire it because I am his friend; may we not co-operate in bringing it about?"

Cameron was sent for; the matter was presented to him, and he at once said, with some asperity, that "Curtin should be got rid of." I suggested that if Lincoln would tender to Curtin a foreign mission in view of his broken health, it would solve the difficulty and enable Curtin to retire. To this Cameron agreed, and within half an hour thereafter we startled Lincoln by appearing before him together, accompanied by Forney. It was the first time Cameron and I had appeared before Lincoln to unite in asking him to perform any public act. I stated the case briefly but frankly, and he promptly responded that Curtin was entitled to the honor suggested, and that it would be a great pleasure to him to tender him the place. "But," said he, "I'm in the position of young Sheridan when old Sheridan called him to task, for his rakish conduct, and said to him that he must take a wife; to which young Sheridan replied: 'Very well, father, but whose wife shall I take?' It's all very well," he added, "to say that I will give Curtin a mission, but whose mission am I to take? I would not offer him anything but a first-class one." To this Cameron replied that a second-class mission would answer the purpose, but Forney and I resented that, and said that if a second-class mission was to be discussed we had nothing further to say. Lincoln closed the conference by suggesting that as it seemed to be my affair I should call to see him in the morning. I did so, when Lincoln handed me the following autograph letter, tendering Curtin a first-class mission, to be accepted at the close of his gubernatorial term:

EXECUTIVE MANSION,
WASHINGTON, April 13, 1863.

HONORABLE ANDREW G. CURTIN.

MY DEAR SIR: If, after the expiration of your present term as Governor of Pennsylvania I shall continue in office here, and you shall desire to go abroad, you can do so with one of the first-class missions.

Yours truly,

ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

This letter I delivered to Curtin. The announcement was

at once made to the Associated Press that a foreign mission had been tendered to Curtin, that he had signified his acceptance of it, and that he would not be a candidate for renomination for governor. The popular demand for Curtin's renomination came with such emphasis from every section of the state that within a few weeks after his declination he was compelled to accept the candidacy, and he was nominated in Pittsburgh by an overwhelming majority on the first ballot, and after one of the most desperate contests ever known in the state was re-elected by over 15,000 majority, even with his soldiers disfranchised. Lincoln exhibited unusual interest in that struggle, and his congratulations to Curtin upon his re-election were repeated for several days, and were often as quaint as they were sincere.

The secret of Curtin's re-election in 1863 was the devotion of the Pennsylvania soldiers to him and his cause. He was the earliest of all the governors in the states to devise and put into practical execution every measure that could lessen the sorrows of war to his people. After every battle in which Pennsylvania troops were engaged Curtin was always among the first visitors to camp and hospital, and his sympathetic hand was felt and his voice heard by the sick and wounded. He had his official commissioners to visit every part of the country in search of Pennsylvania troops needing kind ministrations, and early in the war he obtained legislative authority to bring the body of every soldier who was killed or died in the service home for burial at the cost of the state. Every Pennsylvania soldier in the army felt that he had one friend upon whom he could always rely in the war governor of his state, and many hundreds of letters poured in upon Curtin at the capitol every day appealing to him for redress from real or imaginary grievances, every one of which was promptly answered. If injustice was done to any Pennsylvania officer or any hindrance of gallant men in the ranks from just promotion, an early appeal to Curtin invariably brought him to the

front to correct it. It is not surprising, therefore, that when he became a candidate for re-election and was assailed on every side with bitterness, nearly every soldier in the army, whether Democrat or Republican, appealed to his people at home to support and vote for Curtin. While the soldiers were themselves unable to testify their appreciation of their patriotic governor at the polls, every soldier at home on leave, however unskilled in rhetoric, was a most eloquent advocate of Curtin's re-election, and there was hardly a home in the state that had a soldier in the field to which did not come earnest appeals by letters to fathers and brothers to vote for the Soldier's Friend. Thus was Curtin re-elected by a large majority, and by the votes of Democrats who were influenced solely by their sympathy with their sons and brothers in the field whose gratitude to Curtin was reflected in almost every family circle.

It was on Thanksgiving Day of 1863 that Curtin first conceived the idea of state provision for the care and education of the orphans of our fallen soldiers. While on his way in Harrisburg to hear Dr. Robinson's Thanksgiving sermon, he was met by two shivering and starving children, who piteously appealed to him to relieve them of their distress, saying that their father had been killed on the Peninsula and that their mother was broken in health by her efforts to provide for them. He was so deeply impressed and his sympathies so keenly aroused by the children that he heard little of the eloquent sermon. He remembered that all over Pennsylvania there were such orphans without home or bread, and he resolved from that day that some provision should be made for the care of these helpless little ones. Soon after he presided at a meeting at which Henry Ward Beecher was the speaker. Beecher had just returned from England, where he had been most eloquent in his defense of the Union cause, and he was welcomed in Pennsylvania with enthusiasm by the loyal people. In Curtin's introductory speech he, for the first time,

made public allusion to the duty of the state to provide for the orphans of our soldiers who had fallen in battle, and the suggestion was greeted with round after round of applause. Some time before that period the Pennsylvania Railroad had placed at the disposal of the state \$50,000 to equip troops. The money was received by Curtin, but he had no need to use it for the equipment of troops, and if he had covered it into the treasury, it would have merged into the general fund. This money lay idle on special deposit for some months, and Curtin conceived the plan of making it the basis of a fund for the care of our soldiers' orphans. To this President John Edgar Thomson assented, and with \$50,000 already assured, the governor presented the subject to the Legislature in his annual message, and earnestly urged early action. There was much hesitation to support such a bill, and no progress was made in it until near the close of the session. The bill was finally defeated, and when the next Legislature met Curtin arranged with President Thomson for the transportation of a large number of our soldiers' orphans to visit Harrisburg. They were sent free of cost for transportation, and were received into the homes of generous people, ten of them being guests of Curtin in the Executive Mansion. They came bearing the flag under which their fathers had fallen, and the House received them at three o'clock, when patriotic speeches were made, the little orphans sang patriotic songs, and Curtin made a most eloquent appeal to the Legislature to make these children the wards of the commonwealth. The Legislature speedily retraced its steps, passed the bill, and the Governor had the gratification of signing it the next morning. Such was the beginning of the Soldiers' Orphans' Schools which have lasted now for nearly thirty years, which have educated thousands and thousands of the war orphans of the state, and are still performing that humane mission to the few yet in our midst. In this sublime beneficence to the helpless children of our heroes Pennsylvania stands single and alone among the loyal states, and there has not been a class of orphans in any

school in Pennsylvania that has not lisped the name of Curtin with affectionate reverence.

Some of the most momentous official acts of Curtin's public career have almost passed from the recollection of the men of the present who lived at that day, yet they rendered the greatest service to the national government when it was in the gravest peril. After the disastrous Peninsula campaign it became a necessity to summon a large additional force to the field, and it was regarded as a dangerous experiment in view of the despairing condition of public sentiment in the North. Volunteering had entirely ceased; there was at that time no national conscription act; the appeal had to be made directly to the states to raise their respective quotas of troops. As was common in every serious emergency, Curtin was called into the councils of Lincoln, and the subject discussed with a full appreciation of the solemn responsibilities that devolved upon both of them. It was Curtin's suggestion that the governors of the loyal states should be conferred with and got to unite in a formal demand upon the President to call out a large additional force. Eighteen loyal governors responded, and on the 28th of June, 1862, they aroused every loyal heart in the country by their bold demand for the promptest measures to fill up our armies and for the most vigorous prosecution of the war. The address concludes with this patriotic sentence: "All believe that the decisive moment is near at hand, and to that end the people of the United States are desirous to aid promptly in furnishing all reinforcements that you may deem necessary to sustain our government." This address was delivered in person by a number of the governors themselves, and Lincoln replied: "Gentlemen: Fully concurring in the wisdom of the views expressed to me in so patriotic a manner by you in the communication of the 28th of June, I have decided to call into the service an additional force of 300,000 men." The Altoona conference of the loyal governors was originally proposed by Curtin to Lincoln and cordially approved by the President before the call was issued. It was a

supreme necessity to crystallize the loyal sentiment of the country in support of the coming and then clearly foreshadowed Emancipation policy. Curtin telegraphed Governor Andrew of Massachusetts: "In the present emergency would it not be well that the loyal Governors should meet at some point in the Border States to take measures for the more active support of the government?" The governors of Massachusetts, Ohio, and West Virginia responded promptly, and the call was issued on the 14th of September, and the Altoona conference met on the 24th, the day after the Emancipation Proclamation had been published to the world. There were seventeen governors in attendance, and after a full interchange of views, Curtin and Andrew were charged with the duty of preparing an address to the President and the country. That address, coming as the united voice of the loyal states through their governors, was regarded by Lincoln as of inestimable service to the cause of the Union. It not only gave the keynote for every loyal man to support the Emancipation policy, but it suggested to the President to call out additional troops to keep a reserve of 100,000 men for any emergency of the war.

Thus, from the day that Curtin welcomed Lincoln in the hall of the House of Representatives at Harrisburg when on his way to be inaugurated, until their last meeting in the same hall when it was the chamber of death, and sorrowing patriots passed silently through it to take their last look upon the face of the martyred President, he was side by side with Lincoln in every trial; and, backed by his great state, he was enabled to render a service to the President and to the country unapproached by any other governor of the Union. How gratefully his public record was appreciated by the people of Pennsylvania of that day is clearly shown by reference to the journals of our Legislature of April 12, 1866, when a resolution was passed, by unanimous vote in both branches, thanking him, in the name of Pennsylvania, "for the fidelity with which, during the four years of war by which our country was ravaged and its free institutions threatened, he stood by the

national government and cast into the scales of loyalty and the Union the honor, the wealth, and the strength of the state." No Governor of any State ever received such a tribute as this from all parties when about to retire from his high office after six years of service during the most heated partisan and factional strife ever known in our political history.

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

LINCOLN AND STEVENS

ABRAHAM LINCOLN and Thaddeus Stevens were strangely mated. Lincoln as President and Stevens as Commoner of the nation during the entire period of our sectional war assumed the highest civil responsibilities in the administrative and legislative departments of the government. While Lincoln was President of the whole people, Stevens, as Commoner, was their immediate representative and oracle in the popular branch of Congress when the most momentous legislative measures of our history were conceived and enacted. No two men were so much alike in all the sympathy of greatness for the friendless and the lowly, and yet no two men could have been more unlike in the methods by which they sought to obtain the same great end. Lincoln's humanity was one of the master attributes of his character, and it was next to impossible for him to punish even those most deserving of it. In Stevens humanity and justice were singularly blended, and while his heart was ever ready to respond to the appeal of sorrow, he was one of the sternest of men in the administration of justice upon those who had oppressed the helpless. No man pleaded so eloquently in Congress for the deliverance of the bondmen of the South as did Stevens, and he made ceaseless battle for every measure needed by ignorant freedmen for the enjoyment of their rights obtained through the madness of Southern rebellion; and there was no man of all our statesmen whose voice was so eloquent for the swift punishment of the authors of the war. He declared on the

floor of Congress that if he had the power he would summon a military commission to try, convict, and execute Jefferson Davis and other leaders of the rebellion "for the murders at Andersonville, the murders at Salisbury, and the shooting down of prisoners-of-war in cold blood"; and when the whole world was shocked by the relentless vengeance of Juarez in the summary execution of Maximilian, he was the one man of Congress who rose and boldly defended the Mexican President; and his ground of defense was that Maximilian had sought to usurp power from the weak. Lincoln's humanity was always predominant in his nature and always reflected itself in his public and private acts. He never signed a death-warrant unless it was absolutely unavoidable, and then always with a degree of sorrow that could not be concealed. He earnestly desired that Davis and all Southern leaders who might be called to account after the war for precipitating the nation into fraternal strife should safely escape from the country; and Maximilian could not have appealed in vain to Lincoln for his life had it been within his power to save him. Such were the conflicting attributes of the two great civil leaders of the country during the war. Each filled his great trust with masterly fidelity, and the opposing qualities of each were potent upon the other.

The country has almost forgotten the exceptionally responsible position of Stevens as the Great Commoner of our civil war. It is the one high trust of a free government that must be won solely by ability and merit. The Commoner of a republic is the organ of the people, and he can hold his place only when all confess his pre-eminent qualities for the discharge of his duties. Presidents, Cabinets, Senators, and Representatives may be accidents. Fortuitous circumstances or sudden mutations in politics may create any of these civil functionaries in a popular government to serve their brief terms and pass away into forgetfulness, but the Commoner of the nation must be the confessed "leader of leaders." Mere popular attributes are valueless in struggling for such a place.

Only he who can come to the front whenever occasion calls, lead discordant elements to a common end, and maintain his position in all the sudden changes of a mercurial body can go into history as an American Commoner; and Stevens grandly, undisputedly, met these high requirements. There were those around him in Congress much riper in experience in national legislation, for he had served but six years in the House when the war began, and four of those were nearly a decade before the rebellion; but when the great conflict came before which all but the bravest-hearted quailed, Stevens' supreme ability and dauntless courage made him speedily accepted by all as the leader of the popular branch of Congress. In all the conflicts of opinion and grave doubts among even the sincerest of men as to the true policy of the government in meeting armed rebellion, Stevens was the one man who never faltered, who never hesitated, who never temporized, but who was ready to meet aggressive treason with the most aggressive assaults. He and Lincoln worked substantially on the same lines, earnestly striving to attain the same ends, but Stevens was always in advance of public sentiment, while Lincoln ever halted until assured that the considerate judgment of the nation would sustain him. Stevens was the pioneer who was ever in advance of the government in every movement for the suppression of the rebellion, whether by military or civil measures. He always wanted great armies, heroic chieftains, and relentless blows, and he was ready to follow the overthrow of rebellion with the sternest retributive policy. He had faith that the people would sustain the war—that they would patriotically submit to any sacrifice of blood and treasure necessary to preserve the Union and overthrow slavery that was the cause of fraternal conflict, and he was always in the lead in pressing every measure that promised to weaken the slave power in any part of the Union.

Lincoln was inspired by the same patriotic purpose and sympathies with Stevens in everything but his policy of vengeance. Lincoln possessed the sagacity to await the full-

ness of time for all things, and thus he failed in nothing. These two great civil leaders were not in close personal relations. Stevens was ever impatient of Lincoln's tardiness, and Lincoln was always patient with Stevens' advanced and often impracticable methods. Stevens was a born dictator in politics; Lincoln a born follower of the people, but always wisely aiding them to the safest judgment that was to be his guide. When Stevens proposed the abolition of slavery in the District of Columbia, and followed it with the extension of the elective franchise to the liberated slaves, very many of his party followers in the House faltered and threatened revolt, and only a man of Stevens' iron will and relentless mastery could have commanded a solid party vote for the measures which were regarded by many as political suicide. I sat by him one morning in the House before the session had opened when the question of Negro suffrage in the District of Columbia was about to be considered, and I heard a leading Pennsylvania Republican approach him to protest against committing the party to that policy. Stevens' grim face and cold gray eye gave answer to the man before his bitter words were uttered. He waved his hand to the trembling suppliant and bade him go to his seat and vote for the measure or confess himself a coward to the world. The Commoner was obeyed, for had disobedience followed the offender would have been proclaimed to his constituents, over the name of Stevens, as a coward, and that would have doomed him to defeat.

The relations between Lincoln and Stevens were always friendly, but seldom cordial. Stevens did not favor the nomination of Lincoln in 1860, although he voted for him as a second choice in preference to Seward. He was the champion of John McLean for President, and presented the anomaly of the most radical Republican leader of the country, Giddings excepted, supporting the most conservative candidate for the Presidency. He was politician enough to understand that there was a large conservative element, especially in Penn-

sylvania and Indiana, that had to be conciliated to elect a Republican President, and he loved McLean chiefly because McLean had dared to disobey the commands of Jackson when in his Cabinet. He was again a delegate when Lincoln was renominated in 1864, and he voted for Lincoln simply because it was not possible to nominate any other man more in accord with his convictions; but in neither of these conventions, in both of which he voted for Lincoln, was he enthusiastic in Lincoln's cause. He had faith in Lincoln's patriotism and integrity, but he believed him weak because he kept far behind Stevens in his war measures, and he was especially bitter against the nomination of Johnson for Vice-President instead of Hamlin, but he permitted his vote to be recorded for Johnson in obedience to the obvious purpose of his own delegation and of the convention to nominate him. I sat close by him in the first informal meeting of the Pennsylvania delegation in Baltimore in 1864, and, being a delegate-at-large, I was one of the first four who voted on the choice for Vice-President. When I voted for Johnson, Stevens was startled, and turning to me he said in a tone of evident bitterness, "Can't you find a candidate for Vice-President in the United States, without going down to one of those damned rebel provinces to pick one up?" I gave a kind answer and evaded discussion of the subject. He had no personal love for either of the candidates for whom his own vote had been finally cast, but his hatred of McClellan called out his fiercest invective and made him ready to do tireless battle for his defeat. He harshly judged all men who pretended to prosecute the war while protecting slavery, and he believed that McClellan was a traitor to the cause for which he was leading his armies, and, believing it, declared it.

Stevens never saw Lincoln during the war except when necessity required it. It was not his custom to fawn upon power or flatter authority, and his free and incisive criticism of public men generally prevented him from being in sympathetic touch with most of the officials connected with the ad-

ministration. He was one of the earliest of the party leaders to demand the unconditional and universal freedom of the slaves, and he often grieved Lincoln sorely by his mandatory appeals for an Emancipation Proclamation, and by the keen satire that only he could employ against those who differed from him. It was known to but few that he suffered a serious disappointment from Lincoln when Cameron was appointed to the Cabinet. Stevens took no part in the contest for a Pennsylvania Cabinet officer until after it became known that Lincoln had revoked his offer of a Cabinet portfolio to Cameron about the 1st of January. Stevens then entered the field with great earnestness as a candidate for the Cabinet himself, and the position he desired was that of Secretary of the Treasury. In obedience to his invitation I met him at Harrisburg, and found him more interested in reaching the Cabinet than I had ever known him in any of his political aspirations. Later, when Cameron became again prominent as a Cabinet expectant, Stevens bitterly protested, and when Cameron's appointment was announced he felt personally aggrieved, although few even of his most intimate acquaintances had any knowledge of it. It was his second disappointment in his efforts to reach Cabinet honors. In December, 1839, when the Whig National Convention was about to meet at Harrisburg to decide whether Clay, Harrison, or Scott should be honored with the candidacy, Harrison sent to Stevens by Mr. Purdy an autograph letter voluntarily proposing that if Harrison should be nominated and elected President, Stevens would be made a member of his Cabinet. Stevens was one of the most potent of the political leaders in that convention, and he finally controlled the nomination for Harrison. He never saw or heard from Harrison from that time until he was inaugurated as President, and he was astounded when the Cabinet was nominated to the Senate to find his name omitted. So reticent was he as to Harrison's previous proffer of the position that Mr. Burroughs, who was at the head of the Pennsylvanians in Washington urging Stevens' appointment,

was never advised of the promise he held from Harrison for the place. Harrison died too early to feel the retribution that would surely have come from Stevens, but in his second disappointment Stevens was face to face with Lincoln and side by side with him until death divided them. Only once during Lincoln's administration can I recall Stevens' positive and enthusiastic commendation of Lincoln, and that was when he issued his Emancipation Proclamation in 1862. He then believed in Lincoln, and expected a rapid advance in every line of aggression against slavery and rebellion, but soon new causes of dissent arose between them, as Stevens called for the speedy confiscation of property of those in rebellion and for the punishment of all who were responsible for the civil war. Thus they continued during the whole period of Lincoln's administration, both earnestly working to solve the same great problems in the interest of free government, and yet seldom in actual harmony in their methods and policies.

I am quite sure that Stevens respected Lincoln much more than he would have respected any other man in the same position with Lincoln's convictions of duty. He could not but appreciate Lincoln's generous forbearance even with all of Stevens' irritating conflicts, and Lincoln profoundly appreciated Stevens as one of his most valued and useful co-workers, and never cherished resentment even when Stevens indulged in his bitterest sallies of wit or sarcasm at Lincoln's tardiness. Strange as it may seem, these two great characters, ever in conflict and yet ever battling for the same great cause, rendered invaluable service to each other, and unitedly rendered incalculable service in saving the Republic. Had Stevens not declared for the abolition of slavery as soon as the war began, and pressed it in and out of season, Lincoln could not have issued his Emancipation Proclamation as early as September, 1862. Stevens was ever clearing the underbrush and preparing the soil, while Lincoln followed to sow the seeds that were to ripen in a regenerated Union; and while Stevens was ever hastening the opportunity for Lincoln to consummate great

achievements in the steady advance made for the overthrow of slavery, Lincoln wisely conserved the utterances and efforts of Stevens until the time became fully ripe when the harvest could be gathered. I doubt not that Stevens, had he been in Lincoln's position, would have been greatly sobered by the responsibility that the President must accept for himself alone, and I doubt not that if Lincoln had been a Senator or Representative in Congress, he would have declared in favor of Emancipation long before he did it as President. Stevens as Commoner could afford to be defeated, to have his aggressive measures postponed, and to take up the battle for them afresh as often as he was repulsed; but the President could proclaim no policy in the name of the Republic without absolute assurance of its success. Each in his great trust attained the highest possible measure of success, and the two men who more than all others blended the varied currents of their efforts and crystallized them in the unchangeable policy of the government were Abraham Lincoln and Thaddeus Stevens.

After the death of Lincoln, Stevens was one of the earliest of the Republican leaders to place himself in an aggressively hostile attitude to Johnson, and he persisted in it with tireless energy until he performed his last great task in his plea before the Senate for the conviction of the President under articles of impeachment preferred by the House. He was then greatly enfeebled by broken health, but his mental powers were unabated. I remember meeting him one morning in acting Vice-President Wade's room of the Capitol, before the meeting of the Senate, when the impeachment trial was in progress. Chase had just startled some of the Republican leaders by rulings which foreshadowed the probable acquittal of Johnson. Stevens came limping into Wade's room, dropped into an easy-chair, and at once opened his invective upon Chase. He ended his criticism of the trial with these words: "It is the meanest case, before the meanest tribunal, and on the meanest subject of human history." After the acquittal

of Johnson he seemed almost entirely hopeless of preserving the fruits of the victory won by our armies in the overthrow of the rebellion. I remember meeting him at his house some three weeks before his death. He spoke of the perfidy of Johnson with great bitterness, and seemed clouded with gloom as to the achievements of his own life. He then hoped to go to Bedford Springs to recover sufficient vigor to be able to resume his seat at the next session, but he saw little of the future that promised restoration of the Union with justice to the liberated slaves. Although he was the acknowledged Commoner of the war, and the acknowledged leader of the House as long as he was able to retain his seat after the war had closed, he said, "My life has been a failure. With all this great struggle of years in Washington, and the fearful sacrifice of life and treasure, I see little hope for the Republic." After a moment's pause his face suddenly brightened, and he said, "After all, I may say that my life has not been entirely vain. When I remember that I gave free schools to Pennsylvania, my adopted State, I think my life may have been worth the living." He had lately reprinted his speech delivered in the Pennsylvania House in 1835 that changed the body from its purpose to repeal the free-school law, and he handed me a copy of it, saying, "That was the proudest effort of my life. It gave schools to the poor and helpless children of the State." Thus did the Great Commoner of the nation, crowned with the greenest laurels of our statesmanship, turn back more than a generation from his greatest achievements because they were incomplete, although fully assured, to find the silver lining to the many disappointments of his life.

Stevens, like Lincoln, had few intimate acquaintances, and no one in whom he implicitly confided. That he had had some untold sorrow was accepted by all who knew him well, but none could venture to invade the sacred portals of his inner life. He seldom spoke of himself, but his grim, cynical smile and his pungent invective against the social customs

of the times proclaimed his love of solitude, except when his lot could be cast with the very few congenial spirits he found around him. One name alone ever brightened his stern face and kindled the gray eye that was so often lustreless, and that name was "mother." He loved to speak of her, and when he did so all the harsh lines of his countenance disappeared to give place to the tenderness of a child. That one devotion was like an oasis in the desert of his affections, and, regardless of his individual convictions, he revered everything taught him by his mother. In his will he provided that the sexton of her little churchyard in the bleak hills of Vermont should ever keep her grave green, "and plant roses and other cheerful flowers at each of the four corners of said grave every spring." He also made a devise of \$1000 to aid in the building of a Baptist church in Lancaster, giving in the will this reason for it: "I do this out of respect to the memory of my mother, to whom I owe what little prosperity I have had on earth, which, small as it is, I desire emphatically to acknowledge."

I need hardly say that a man of Stevens' positive and aggressive qualities left an enduring record of his greatness in both the statutes and the fundamental law of the nation. Unlike his distinguished fellow-townsmen, President Buchanan, who with all his long experience in both branches of Congress never formulated a great measure to stand as a monument of his statesmanship, Stevens was the master-spirit of every aggressive movement in Congress to overthrow the rebellion and slavery. His views of the civil war and of reconstruction were pointedly presented in the Confiscation Act of July 17, 1862. It was a radical measure, and clearly foreshadowed the employment of freedmen in the military service of the Union. It was practically the abolition of slavery by Congress under the war powers of the government. Lincoln saw that the passage of the bill was inevitable, and he took occasion to make known the fact that it could not meet with his approval, because it assumed that Congress had the power to abolish

slavery within a state. He went so far as to prepare a veto, but Stevens wisely obviated the necessity of a veto by consenting to an explanatory joint resolution of Congress relieving the bill of its acutely offensive features, and Lincoln signed the bill and the explanatory resolutions together. Stevens was the author of the Fourteenth Amendment to the national Constitution, although it was not accepted as he would have preferred it. This new article of the fundamental law, next to the Thirteenth Article abolishing slavery, is the most important of all the actions of Congress relating to reconstruction. It conferred unchangeably upon the liberated slaves the high right of American citizenship, and made it impossible for any state to abridge the privileges of any race. It also limited representation to the enfranchised voters of the states; it made the validity of the public debt absolutely sacred; prohibited the assumption or payment of Confederate debt by any state; and it disqualified most of the Southern leaders from ever again enjoying citizenship unless their disability were relieved by a two-thirds vote of Congress. Stevens was bitterly opposed to the provision allowing restoration to citizenship of any who had taken the oath of office, military or civil, to support the government and afterward engaged in the rebellion, but, being unable to obtain the absolute disqualification of those men, he accepted the gravest obstacles that he could interpose against the restoration of civil rights. His policy of reconstruction, exclusive of his fierce confiscation and retributive purposes, would have been a priceless blessing to the South, although at the time it would have been accepted as extremely vindictive. He would have held the rebellious states as provinces and governed them as Territories, to await the period when they might with safety be restored to the Union. Had that policy been adopted the desolation almost worse than war would have been averted in the southern states. Sadly as the people of the South were impoverished by war, the greatest humiliation they ever suffered was in the rule of the carpet-bagger and the adventurer who

despoiled them of safety and credit and ran riot in every channel of state authority. Had they been held as provinces there would have been peace, their industries would have been speedily revived, mutual confidence between the North and South would have rapidly strengthened, and in a very few years at the most they would have resumed their position in the galaxy of states; and universal Negro suffrage would not have been in the cup of bitterness they had to drain. Stevens was bitterly denounced by many for his vindictive reconstruction policy; but, stripped of its utterly impracticable and impossible confiscation and retributive features, it would have been the wisest policy for both North and South that could have been adopted.

It is a common belief that on the question of reconstruction and on many other questions relating to the war Stevens planted himself entirely above the Constitution and acted in utter contempt of the supreme law. I have heard thoughtless and malicious people many times quote him as having said "Damn the Constitution!" but Stevens never uttered or cherished such a sentiment. He defined his views on the subject so clearly that none could mistake them in his speech giving his reasons for voting for the admission of West Virginia as a State. He quoted the requirements of the Constitution, and said that it was a mockery to assume that the provisions of the Constitution had been complied with. He did not justify or excuse his vote in favor of the creation of a new state because of his disregard of, or contempt for, the Constitution. On the contrary, he presented the unanswerable argument that Virginia was in rebellion against the government and the Constitution, and had been conceded belligerent rights by our government and by the governments of Europe, thus making her subject to the rules of war governing a public enemy, whereby she placed herself beyond the pale of the Constitution and had no claim upon its protecting attributes. He said, "We may admit West Virginia as a new State, not by virtue of any provision in the Constitution, but under the

- absolute power which the laws of war give us under the circumstances in which we are placed. I shall vote for this bill upon that theory, and upon that alone, for I will not stultify myself by supposing that we have any warrant in the Constitution for this proceeding." The logic that a belligerent power, recognized by ourselves and by the world, was entirely beyond the protecting power of our Constitution was indisputable, and in that case, as in all cases, he always maintained the sanctity of the Constitution to all who had not become public enemies with conceded belligerent rights.

Being outside the pale of the Constitution in war, he held that the insurgent states occupied the legal status of conquered enemies when the war closed, and upon that theory was based his whole policy of reconstruction, including the confiscation of property and the punishment of the leaders of the rebellion. That he was abstractly right in his interpretation of the laws of war cannot be questioned, however widely others may differ from him in the expediency or justice of the measures he proposed. He was one of the first to appreciate the truth that President Johnson had adopted a policy of reconstruction that the Republican party could not sustain. In this I heartily agreed with him, and one of my most valued mementos of the men of war-times is an autograph letter received from Stevens warmly commending an editorial on the subject published in the *Chambersburg Repository*, which I then edited, in which he expressed the hope, since proved gratefully prophetic, that I should one day conduct a daily newspaper in Philadelphia with a hundred thousand readers. I had voted for Johnson's nomination for Vice-President in disregard of Stevens' bitter complaint, but when Johnson had disgraced himself before the nation and the world by his exhibition of inebriety at his inauguration, I had denounced him and demanded his resignation. He never was permitted to return to the Senate as Vice-President, but a little more than a month thereafter the assassination of Lincoln made him President. Assuming that my free criticism

and demand for his resignation would preclude cordial relations between us, I did not visit him in the White House until he had twice requested me to do so through Governor Curtin, and my first and only interview with him convinced me that his policy of reconstruction could not be sustained by the North.

My relations with Stevens for a dozen years before his death were peculiarly pleasant, and as intimate perhaps as was common between him and those in the narrow circle of his close acquaintances. He spent his summers at his quiet mountain-furnace home in Franklin county, where I resided, and during the few years that I was in active practice at the bar in Chambersburg he attended our courts and tried one side of nearly every important cause. In all my acquaintance with the lawyers of Pennsylvania I regard Stevens as having more nearly completed the circle of a great lawyer than any other member of the Pennsylvania bar. He was perfect in practice, a master of the law, exceptionally skillful in eliciting testimony from witnesses, a most sagacious, eloquent, and persuasive advocate, and one of the strongest men before a law court that I have ever heard. He was thoroughly master of himself in his profession, and his withering invective and crushing wit, so often employed in conversation and in political speeches, were never displayed in the trial of a cause unless it was eminently wise to do so; and he was one of the most courteous of men at the bar whether associate or opponent. He was especially generous in his kindness to young members of the bar unless they undertook to unduly flap their fledgling wings, when they were certain to suffer speedy and humiliating discomfiture. His trial of the Hanway treason case before Judge Greer in the United States Court at Philadelphia exhibited his matchless skill in the best use of his matchless powers. While he conceived and directed every feature of the defense, he was the silent man of the trial. He knew the political prejudices which were attached to his then odious attitude on the slavery question, and he put

upon the late Chief Justice, John M. Read, the laboring oars of the trial, as Read was a Democrat of state and even national fame. It was a trial that attracted the attention not only of the nation, but of the civilized world, and was the first case adjudicated in Pennsylvania in our higher courts under the Fugitive Slave Law of 1850. Mr. Gorsuch, a Virginia minister, pursuing his slave into Chester county, was killed in an altercation at Christiana by the friends of the hunted bondman, and Hanway and others were indicted for treason in inciting to rebellion and murder. Hanway was acquitted, and he owed his deliverance to the legal acumen and skill of Thaddeus Stevens.

The highest tribute ever paid to an American statesman since the foundation of the Republic was paid to Thaddeus Stevens by his bereaved constituents of Lancaster county when his dead body lay in state at his home. He died on Thursday, the 11th of August, 1868, and his body was brought from Washington to his home on the following day, and on Saturday it was viewed by thousands of sorrowing friends. The Republican primary elections had been called for that day, and, although Stevens had died three days before and a nomination was to be made for his successor, no one of the several candidates in the county dared to whisper his name as an aspirant while Stevens' body was untombed. Acting under a common inspiration, the people of the county who were entitled to participate in the primary elections cast an unanimous vote for Stevens' renomination as their candidate for Congress when they knew that he had passed away and his body was in state in his humble house in Lancaster. There is nothing in Grecian or Roman story of such a tribute to a dead leader. Monuments were erected in those days to greatness which have crumbled away under the gnawing tooth of time, but the dust of Thaddeus Stevens reposes under a humble monument suggested by himself, located in a humble "City of the Silent," chosen by him because it recognized "equality of man before his Creator," and admitted any of

every race and color to sleep the sleep that knows no waking. The inscription on his monument, dictated by himself, is in these words:

THADDEUS STEVENS,
Born at Danville, Caledonia Co., Vermont,
April 4, 1792.
Died at Washington, D. C.,
August 11, 1868.

I repose in this quiet and secluded spot,
Not from any natural preference for solitude,
But, finding other Cemeteries limited as to Race
By Charter Rules,
I have chosen this that I might illustrate
In my death
The Principles which I advocated
Through a long life:

EQUALITY OF MAN BEFORE HIS CREATOR.

Thus passed away the Great Commoner of the war; the friend of the lowly, the oppressed, and the friendless; the author of our free-school system of Pennsylvania that now gives education to the humblest of every township; and I can fitly quote the eloquent tribute of Charles Sumner: "I see him now as I have so often seen him during life; his venerable form moves slowly with uncertain steps, but the gathered strength of years in his countenance and the light of victory on his path. Politician, calculator, time-server, stand aside; a Hero Statesman passes to his reward."

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

LINCOLN AND GREELEY

HORACE GREELEY was one of the earliest and most fretting of the many thorns in the political pathway of Abraham Lincoln. They served together in Congress in the winter of 1848-49, when Greeley was chosen to a short term to fill a vacancy. Speaking of Lincoln some years after his death, Greeley, referring to his association with him in Congress, said that Lincoln was "personally a favorite on our side," and adds: "He seemed a quiet, good-natured man; did not aspire to leadership, and seldom claimed the floor." For ten years after these two memorable characters separated as members of Congress Lincoln was little known or heard of outside of his state of Illinois, and when his great contest with Douglas for the Senate attracted the attention of the whole country in 1858, Greeley, with his powerful Republican organ, vastly the most potent political journal in the country, took positive grounds in favor of the return of Douglas to the Senate by the Republicans of Illinois, because of Douglas' open hostility to the Lecompton policy of the Buchanan administration. This attitude of Greeley's *Tribune* was one of the most serious obstacles that confronted Lincoln in his great campaign against Douglas, and it is possible that the influence of the *Tribune* may have lost Lincoln the legislature. He carried the popular vote and elected the Republican state ticket, but Douglas won the legislature and was re-elected to the Senate. Thus did Greeley antagonize Lincoln in the first great battle he made for national leadership in politics, and with the ex-

ception of a single act of Greeley's, in which he served Lincoln to an extent that can hardly be measured, when in the early part of 1860 he opened the broadsides of the *Tribune* against Seward's nomination for President, he was a perpetual thorn in Lincoln's side, seldom agreeing with him on any important measure, and almost constantly criticising him boldly and often bitterly.

The first assault made on the Seward lines that attracted any attention from the country was the unexpected and aggressive revolt of Greeley's *Tribune* against Seward some months before the meeting of the Chicago Convention that nominated Lincoln. It attracted special attention from considerate Republicans throughout the country, because this assault came from the ablest Republican editor of the nation, from Seward's own state, and from one who was presumed to be Seward's personal and political friend. It was not then known to the public that on the 11th of November, 1854, he had written a pungent letter to Seward and formally severed all political association with him, to take effect in the following February, when Seward was re-elected to the United States Senate. The letter was written in strict confidence, but in 1860, when the friends of Seward keenly felt Greeley's criticisms on Seward's availability as a Presidential candidate, and especially in the bitter disappointment of Seward's friends after his defeat at Chicago, such free allusions were made to the contents of this letter and to Greeley's personal animosity that at Greeley's request the letter was made public. Until Greeley had thus thrown his great *Tribune* into the contest against Seward's nomination Seward was the generally-accepted Republican candidate for President in 1860, and, notwithstanding the ability and influence exerted by Greeley and his newspaper, the Republicans of the country elected a convention overwhelmingly in favor of Seward. It was Greeley, however, who drove the entering wedge that made it possible to break the Seward column, and I shall never forget the smile that played upon his countenance as he sat at the

head of the Oregon delegation in the Wigwam at Chicago and heard the announcement that Abraham Lincoln had been nominated as the candidate of the convention for President. He had made no battle for Lincoln. His candidate was Edward Bates of Missouri, whose cause he championed with all his fervency and power; but it is evident that in selecting Bates as his favorite he had been influenced solely to choose the most available candidate to contest the honor with Seward. After Bates, he was for any one to beat Seward, and when Lincoln became the chief competitor of Seward he was more than willing to accept him. After the nomination of Lincoln, Greeley's *Tribune* was leader of leaders among the Republican journals of the land in the great struggle that elected Lincoln President. But his rejoicing over the success of Lincoln was speedily chilled by the announcement that Seward would be called as premier of the new administration. The appointment of Seward as Secretary of State meant the mastery of Thurlow Weed in wielding the patronage and power of the administration in New York, and it meant much more than that to Greeley. It meant that all the power that Seward and Weed could exercise would be wielded relentlessly to punish Greeley for his revolt against Seward. On the very day that Lincoln entered the Presidency, therefore, Greeley was hopelessly embittered against him, and while no man in the whole land was more conscientious than Greeley in the performance of every patriotic and personal duty, he was also human, and with all his boundless generosity and philanthropy he was one of the best haters I have ever known.

Soon after Lincoln's election Greeley put himself in an attitude that he must have known at the time was an utterly impossible one for Lincoln to accept. That he was influenced in any degree by a desire to embarrass Lincoln I do not for a moment believe, but it is none the less the truth of history that, after having done much to make Lincoln's nomination possible, he did more perhaps than any one man in the country to assure his election, and then he publicly demanded

that Lincoln should be so far forgetful of his oath to maintain the Constitution as to permit the Southern states to secede in peace. Only three days after Lincoln's election Greeley published an editorial in the *Tribune* in which he said: "If the Cotton States shall become satisfied that they can do better out of the Union than in it, we insist on letting them go in peace. . . . The right to secede may be a revolutionary one, but it exists nevertheless. We must ever resist the right of any State to remain in the Union and nullify or defy the laws thereof. To withdraw from the Union is quite another matter, and whenever a considerable section of our Union shall deliberately resolve to get out we shall resist all coercive measures designed to keep it in. We hope never to live in a republic whereof one section is pinned to another by bayonets." Again, on the 17th of December, 1860, just after the secession of South Carolina, a leading editorial in the *Tribune*, speaking of the Declaration of Independence, said: "If it justified the secession from the British empire of three million of colonists in 1776, we do not see why it would not justify the secession of five million of Southerners from the Federal Union in 1861. . . . If seven or eight contiguous States shall present themselves at Washington saying, 'We hate the Federal Union; we have withdrawn from it; we give you the choice between acquiescing in our secession and arranging amicably all incidental questions on the one hand, and attempting to subdue us on the other,' we would not stand up for coercion, for subjugation, for we do not think it would be just. We hold to the right of self-government even when invoked in behalf of those who deny it to others." Less than two weeks before the inauguration of Lincoln, on the 23d of February, 1861, and the same day on which his paper announced Lincoln's midnight journey from Harrisburg to Washington, Greeley said in a leading editorial: "We have repeatedly said, and we once more insist, that the great principle embodied by Jefferson in the Declaration of American Independence, that governments derive their just powers

from the consent of the governed, is sound and just, and that if the Slave States, the Cotton States, or the Gulf States only choose to form an independent nation, they have a clear moral right to do so. Whenever it shall be clear that the great body of Southern people have become conclusively alienated from the Union and anxious to escape from it, we will do our best to forward their views."

Such were the pointed and earnest utterances of Greeley between the period of Lincoln's election and of his inauguration, and it is needless to say that these utterances not only grieved but embarrassed Lincoln to an extent that can hardly be appreciated at this time. Had Greeley stood alone in these utterances, even then his position and power would have made his attitude one of peculiar trouble to Lincoln, but he did not stand alone. Not only the entire Democratic party, with few exceptions, but a very large proportion of the Republican party, including some of its ablest and most trusted leaders, believed that peaceable secession, that might reasonably result in early reconstruction, was preferable to civil war. The constitutional right of coercion by the government upon a seceded state was gravely disputed by most Democratic statesmen and by many Republican statesmen; and it is worthy of note that Lincoln, like Buchanan, studiously avoided any attempt at coercion until the South wantonly precipitated war by firing upon the starving garrison in Fort Sumter. The first gun fired upon Sumter solved the problem of coercion. Coercion at once ceased to be an issue. The South had coerced the government into war by causelessly firing upon the flag of the nation and upon a garrison that had committed no overt act of war; and from that day until the surrender of the Southern armies to Grant and Sherman the overwhelming sentiment of every Northern state demanded the prosecution of the war to conquer Secession. Had Buchanan or Lincoln fired a single gun solely to coerce the Southern states to remain in the Union, the North would have been hopelessly divided, and the administration would

surely have been overthrown in any attempt to prosecute the war. Greeley recognized the fact that the firing upon Sumter ended the issue of coercion as understood and discussed until that time, and from the day that Lincoln issued his call for seventy-five thousand troops to engage in the war that had been so insanely precipitated against the government he heartily sustained the President and his policy; but he added new grief and fresh embarrassments to Lincoln by his fretful impatience and his repeated and emphatic demands that the army should be hurled against the Confederates as soon as it was organized. "On to Richmond!" was his almost daily battle-cry, and Greeley was overwhelmed with sorrow and humiliation when at last his impetuous orders were obeyed and McDowell's army was defeated and hurled back into the intrenchments of Washington.

When war was accepted as a necessity no man in the country was more earnest in his support of a most vigorous and comprehensive war policy than was Greeley. After the lesson of the first Bull Run he appreciated the fact that a great war was upon us, and every measure looking to the increase of our armies and the maintenance of our severely strained credit was supported by the *Tribune* with all of Greeley's matchless ability and vigor; but he was never without some disturbing issue with Lincoln and the policy of the administration. Sincerely patriotic himself, he was as sincere in his convictions on all questions of public policy, and he seldom took pause to consider the claims of expediency when he saw what he believed to be the way dictated by the right. He believed Lincoln equally patriotic with himself, and equally sincere in every conviction and public act, but no two men were more unlike in their mental organization. Greeley was honest, aggressive, impulsive, and often ill advised in attempting to do the right thing in the wrong way. Lincoln was honest, patient, considerate beyond any man of his day, and calmly awaited the fullness of time for accomplishing the great achievements he hoped for. Writing of Lincoln some

time after his death, Greeley said that after the war began "Lincoln's tenacity of purpose paralleled his former immobility; I believe he would have been nearly the last, if not the very last, man in America to recognize the Southern Confederacy had its armies been triumphant. He would have preferred death." That two such men should differ, and widely differ, and that Greeley should often differ in bitterness from Lincoln's apparent tardiness, was most natural; and with a great war constantly creating new issues of the gravest magnitude Greeley was kept in constant conflict with Lincoln on some great question while honestly and patriotically supporting the government in the prosecution of the war.

The question of destroying slavery enlisted Greeley's most earnest efforts when it became evident that a great civil war must be fought for the preservation of the Union, and on that issue he fretted Lincoln more than any other one man in the United States, because he had greater ability and greater power than any whose criticisms could reach either Lincoln or the public. While the Cabinet had as much discord as there was between Lincoln and Greeley, and while even great Senators and Representatives of the same political faith with the President had serious dispute with him on the subject, Greeley was the most vexatious of all, for he was tireless in effort and reached the very heart of the Republican party in every state in the Union with his great newspaper. Notwithstanding the loyal support given to Lincoln by the Republicans throughout the country, Greeley was in closer touch with the active loyal sentiment of the people than even the President himself, and his journal constantly inspired not only those who sincerely believed in early Emancipation, but all who were inclined to factious hostility to Lincoln, to most aggressive efforts to embarrass the administration by untimely forcing the Emancipation policy. Finally, Greeley's patience became exhausted over what he regarded as the inexcusable inaction of Lincoln on the subject of Emancipation, and on the 20th of August, 1862, he published in his own newspaper

an open letter to Lincoln denouncing him for his failure to execute the Confiscation Act in "mistaken deference to rebel slavery," for bowing to the influence of what he called "certain fossil politicians hailing from the Border States," and because our army officers "evinced far more solicitude to uphold slavery than to put down the rebellion." Thus plainly accused by one whose patriotism Lincoln did not question and whose honesty of purpose he could not doubt, Lincoln felt that he could no longer be silent, and on the 22d of August he addressed a letter to Greeley that did more to steady the loyal sentiment of the country in a very grave emergency than anything that ever came from Lincoln's pen. It is one of Lincoln's clearest and most incisive presentations of any question. Greeley, with all his exceptional tact and ability in controversy, was unable successfully to answer it. It was in that letter that Lincoln said: "I would save the Union; I would save it the shortest way under the Constitution"; and he followed these terse utterances with the statement, several times referred to in these articles, that he would save the Union either by the destruction or the maintenance of slavery as might best serve the great end he had in view. It should be remembered that at the time this letter was written by Lincoln to Greeley his draft of the Emancipation Proclamation had been prepared nearly one month, and precisely one month after he wrote the letter he issued his preliminary proclamation; but the letter gives no indication whatever as to his action on the issue beyond his concluding sentence, in which he says: "I intend no modification of my often expressed personal wish that all men for ever could be free."

This constant friction between Greeley and Lincoln logically led Greeley into the ranks of the opposition to Lincoln's renomination in 1864, and he labored most diligently to accomplish Lincoln's overthrow. His ripe experience in politics prevented him from falling in with the few disappointed Republican leaders who nominated Fremont at Cleveland

before the Baltimore Convention met. He would gladly have joined in that effort had he not fully appreciated the fact that the occasion was too momentous to organize a faction on personal or political grievances; but, while he kept aloof from the Fremont movement, he aggressively resisted the nomination of Lincoln, and on the day the convention met he published an earnest protest and indicated very clearly that Lincoln's nomination meant Republican defeat. He had long been in intercourse with the friends of Chase, and he would gladly have accepted Chase or Grant, or, indeed, almost any other Republican in the country whose name had been mentioned for the Presidency, in preference to Lincoln. When Lincoln was renominated by practically an unanimous vote, Greeley avoided direct antagonism to the party, but earnestly co-operated with Senator Wade and Representative Davis in their open rebellion against Lincoln. Wade and Davis issued an address to the people of the United States that appeared in Greeley's journal on the 5th of August, in which Lincoln was severely arraigned for usurping the authority of Congress and for withholding his approval to a bill presented to him just on the eve of adjournment, for the purpose, as they assumed, of holding "the Electoral votes of the rebel States at the dictation of his personal ambition." Such an appeal, coming from two of the ablest of the Republican leaders, cast a dark gloom over the prospects of the Republican party, and to the support of this revolt Greeley added an ostentatious and ill-advised effort to negotiate a peace through a plausible adventurer commonly known as "Colorado" Jewett. The effusive and irrepressible George N. Sanders was involved in it, and through Greeley they communicated to Lincoln a basis of peace that Greeley was led to believe the South would accept.

The terms suggested were the restoration of the Union, the abolition of slavery, universal amnesty, payment of \$400,000,000 for the slaves, full representation to be given to the Southern states in Congress, and a national convention to be

called at once to engraft the new policy on the Constitution. Instead of maintaining the secrecy necessary to the success of an adjustment of the difficulty between the sections then at war, the Greeley-Jewett negotiations soon became public, and Lincoln was earnestly importuned by Greeley to meet the emergency by opening the doors widely to the consideration of any proposition of peace. Lincoln, in his abundant caution, although entirely without hope of accomplishing anything by the Greeley negotiations, transmitted a paper to be delivered to the Confederates who were assuming to act for the South—a statement over his signature—saying that any proposition for “the restoration of peace, the integrity of the whole Union, and the abandonment of slavery, and which comes by and with an authority that can control the armies now at war against the United States, will be received and considered by the executive government of the United States, and will be met by liberal terms on other substantial and collateral points, and the bearer or bearers thereof shall have safe-conduct both ways.” Greeley had become enthusiastic in his efforts to accomplish peace. He was a lover of peace, an earnest and inherent foe of the arbitrament of the sword under all circumstances, and when he found that the whole effort made to arrest fraternal war brought only a contemptuous rejection of Lincoln’s proposition from those who assumed to represent the Confederate government, he was profoundly humiliated. It is fortunate for both Greeley and the country that Messrs. Clay and Holcombe, who assumed to speak for the Confederate government, refused even to consider the question of peace on the basis of a restored Union and the abandonment of slavery. Had they entertained the proposition, or even pretended to entertain it, they would have misled Greeley into a violent crusade against the further prosecution of the war and into as violent hostility to the re-election of Lincoln.

The pronounced anti-war platform of the Democratic Convention that nominated McClellan against Lincoln was even

less to Greeley's liking than the attitude of the Republicans, and finally, as the Wade and Davis manifesto seemed to have fallen stillborn upon the country, and Greeley's negotiations for peace had ended disastrously, without credit to any, Greeley had no choice but to fall in with the Lincoln procession and advocate the success of the Republican ticket. Sherman's capture of Atlanta and Sheridan's victories in the Valley started the tidal wave in favor of Lincoln, and Greeley was quite prepared, through his sad experiences in his hostility to the administration, to fall in with the tide and share the victory his party was then certain to win. After Lincoln's re-election there was little opportunity for Greeley to take issue with Lincoln. During the winter of 1865 he earnestly favored every suggestion looking to the termination of the war upon some basis that would bring the South back into cordial relations with the Union. The failure of the Hampton Roads conference between Lincoln and the Confederate Commissioners was regretted by Greeley, but he no longer criticised Lincoln with his old-time severity; and when, after Lee's surrender and the final triumph of the Union cause, Lincoln's life was taken by the assassin's bullet, Greeley and Lincoln were more nearly in harmonious relations than they had ever been at any time from the day of Lincoln's inauguration. When the war ended Greeley was the first prominent man of the country to demand universal amnesty and impartial suffrage. A leading editorial in the *Tribune* demanding the forgiveness of the insurgents as the price of universal suffrage to the freedmen startled the country, and cost Greeley the Senatorial honors he much coveted.

While Greeley was one of the founders of the Republican party, and certainly did more to make it successful than any other one man of the nation, he gathered few of its honors and was seldom in harmony with Republican authority in state or nation. His rebellion against Seward in 1860 cost him an election to the United States Senate in 1861. His universal amnesty and suffrage policy, proclaimed immediately after

the war, again defeated him as a Senatorial candidate in 1865, and while he accepted Grant for President in 1868 and supported his election with apparent cordiality, he very soon drifted into a hostile attitude toward the administration. Grant had none of Lincoln's patience and knew little of Lincoln's conciliatory methods; and when Greeley rebelled Grant allowed him to indulge his rebellious ideas to his heart's content. Long before the close of Grant's first administration Greeley was ripe for revolution, and was one of the earliest of those who inaugurated the Liberal Republican movement of 1872 that nominated Greeley as its candidate for President. I cordially sympathized with the revolt against Grant in 1872, and was chairman of the delegation from Pennsylvania in the Cincinnati convention. My relations with Greeley had been of the most friendly character from the time I first met him when a boy-journalist at the Whig Convention in Philadelphia in 1848, and I not only profoundly respected his sincerity, his philanthropy, and his masterly ability, but I cherished an affection for him that I felt but for few, if any, of our public men. He was surprised when he learned from me, after the delegation to the Liberal Convention had been selected in Pennsylvania, that I was not urging his nomination for President. He believed that all my personal inclinations would make me favor him at any time that it might be in my power to do so, and he made an appointment by telegraph to meet me at the Colonnade Hotel in Philadelphia to discuss the question of the Presidency. We met at the appointed time, and I greatly pained Greeley when I told him that I did not believe his nomination would be a wise one, because I saw no possible chance for his election. He believed me when I assured him that I had no candidate whom I preferred to him, and that I was influenced solely by my desire to protect him from a great personal disaster and the country from a failure in the then promising effort to overthrow the political rule that had obtained under Grant. I told him that I did not believe it possible for the

Democrats to support him, and without their support his election would be utterly hopeless. After hearing me very fully, and evidently in great sorrow because of the attitude I assumed, he finally made this significant remark: "Well, perhaps the Democrats wouldn't take me head foremost, but they might take me boots foremost." I well understood that Greeley meant that while he might not be an available candidate for President, he might be an acceptable candidate for the second place on the ticket. I at once answered: "Yes, Mr. Greeley, with a conservative Republican for President you can easily be nominated for Vice-President and add great strength to the ticket." I said: "There are two names which seem to me to be the strongest—David Davis and Charles Francis Adams: which would you prefer?" Greeley answered: "The name of Adams leaves a bad taste in my mouth; I would prefer Davis"; and we finally agreed that I should go to the Cincinnati Convention and support the nomination of Davis for President and Greeley for Vice-President.

While I knew that Greeley most reluctantly gave up the idea of being nominated for President, I did not doubt that his candidacy for that office was practically ended by our conference. When I went to Cincinnati, I there met Leonard Swett, John D. Defrees, Senator Fenton, and others, and we started out to accomplish the nomination of Davis and Greeley. Some fifteen or twenty of us met at ten o'clock in the evening and decided on a programme by which we confidently expected to nominate Davis and Greeley on the first ballot. But while we were thus conferring General Frank P. Blair had gotten together a conference between some of the more radical supporters of Greeley and the supporters of B. Gratz Brown, and their conference ended by deciding to nominate Greeley for President and Brown for Vice-President. By this new combination we were deprived of the support of the important state of New York, and also lost a large support in the West. While many of the New York delegates would have preferred the nomination of Davis and Greeley, when Greeley was presented as a hopeful candidate for Presi-

dent the delegation naturally united in his support, and Brown brought into the combination a large number of Western delegates who would have preferred Davis had they been free to exercise their own judgment in selecting a candidate. Davis was thus practically out of the race, and after giving a complimentary vote to Curtin a large majority of the Pennsylvania delegation united with me in supporting the nomination of Adams. I did not regard Adams as possessing the qualities of availability presented in Davis, but Adams seemed to be the only man who had a reasonable prospect of winning the nomination over Greeley. I was placed in the most unpleasant attitude of supporting a man for President to whom I was almost an entire stranger, and for whom I had little personal sympathy, against Greeley, for whom I cherished the profoundest respect and affection.

On the first ballot Adams led Greeley by a vote of 203 to 147, with a large scattering vote between Trumbull, Brown, Davis, Curtin, and Chase. On the second ballot Adams rose to 243 and Greeley to 239, with Trumbull to 148. On the third ballot Adams had 264, Greeley 258, and Trumbull 156. On the fourth ballot Adams increased to 279, and Greeley fell off to 251, with Trumbull still holding 141. On the fifth ballot Adams had 309 and Greeley 258; and on the sixth and final ballot, as first reported, Greeley led Adams 8 votes, having 332 to Adams 324. This was the first ballot on which Greeley led Adams, and it clearly indicated that the convention was resistlessly drifting to Greeley as its candidate. There was at once a rush from different delegations to change votes from Adams to Greeley. I did not participate in it, and only when a majority of votes had been cast and recorded for him did I announce the change of the Pennsylvania delegation to Greeley. The ballot as finally announced was 482 for Greeley and 187 for Adams. While the balloting was in progress Greeley was sitting in his editorial room in the *Tribune* office along with one of his editorial assistants, who informed me that Greeley became intensely agitated as the sixth ballot developed his growing strength; and when the telegrams an-

nounced that he led Adams on that vote, he excitedly exclaimed: "Why don't McClure change the vote of Pennsylvania?" The next bulletin he received announced his nomination, and he promptly telegraphed to Whitelaw Reid, then his chief editorial associate, who was in attendance at the convention: "Tender my grateful acknowledgments to the members of the convention for the generous confidence they have shown me, and assure them that I shall endeavor to deserve it."

I was greatly disappointed at the result of the convention, and was deeply grieved at what I regarded as a cruel sacrifice of one of the men I most loved and the surrender of a great opportunity to win a national victory in the interest of better government and sectional tranquility. The nomination of Greeley carried with it the nomination of B. Gratz Brown for Vice-President, and when the convention adjourned I returned to my room at the hotel feeling that our work was farcical, because I did not regard it as possible for the Democrats to accept Greeley. Before midnight, however, a number of leading Democrats from different parts of the country who were in constant touch with the convention pulled themselves together, and their utterances given to the world the next morning foreshadowed the possibility that the Democrats would accept Greeley and Brown; but even when the Democratic National Convention with substantial unanimity accepted both the candidates and the platform of the Liberal Republicans, I saw little hope for Greeley's election, as I feared that the Democratic rank and file could not be brought to his support. For some time after both conventions had nominated Greeley we had a Greeley tidal-wave that seemed likely to sweep the country. In Pennsylvania, as chairman of the Liberal State Committee, I had voluntary letters from hundreds of leading Republicans in every section of the state indicating their purpose to fall in with the Greeley current, but the loss of North Carolina early in August not only halted the Greeley tide, but made its returning ebb swift and destructive. With this obvious revulsion in the political current

the great business interests of the country were speedily consolidated in opposition to any change in the national administration, and there never was a day after the North Carolina defeat when Greeley's election seemed to be within the range of possibility.

The September elections proved that Greeley's nomination made no impression upon the Republicans in New England, including his native state of Vermont, where it was hoped he would have thousands of Republican followers, and the October elections came like an avalanche against the Liberal movement. Greeley delivered campaign speeches in New England and in the middle states which were models of statesmanlike ability, but he was fighting a hopeless battle; and when the October elections cast their gloom upon his political hopes he was called to nurse a dying wife, where for nearly a month he passed sleepless nights, and closed her eyes in death only a week before his overwhelming defeat in November. Thus at once broken in heart and hope, the most brilliant and forceful editor the country has ever produced, and one of the sincerest and most tireless of American philanthropists, pined away until the 29th of November, 1872, when he died. Immediately after the election I had written him a personal letter expressing my sincere sympathy with him in his multiplied misfortunes. One of the most valued of my mementos of the men of the past is his reply, dated November 10th, the last day on which he ever wrote anything, as follows:

(Private.)

NEW YORK, November 10, 1872.

MY DEAR FRIEND:

I am a man of many sorrows, and doubtless have deserved them, but I beg to say that I do not forget the gallant though luckless struggle you made in my behalf. I am not well.

Yours truly,

HORACE GREELEY.

COL. A. K. MCCLURE,
144 So. Sixth St., Philada.

Thus ended one of the most useful and one of the saddest lives of the last generation. He was of heroic mould in his matchless battles for the lowly and helpless, and was always invincible in political controversy, because his integrity was ever as conspicuous as his ability; but he was as impatient as he was philanthropic, and he most longed for what was so pointedly denied him—the generous approval of his countrymen. He was made heart-sore when he saw the colored voters, whose cause he had championed when no political party had the courage to espouse it, almost unitedly oppose his election to the Presidency; and finally, smitten in his home, in his ambition, and in his great newspaper, Horace Greeley, broken in heart and hopelessly clouded in intellect, gave up the battle of life.

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author was a Pennsylvanian like McClure or a Mississippian like Jefferson Davis, when the underlying theme of the brothers' conflict was moral drama. There was, however, an exception in McClure's case that no Southerner could claim; the Northerner of that age had not—and would never—recover from the emotional shock of the assassin's bullet that had cut down Lincoln. Not by accident is this a book of a world that revolved around the axis of Lincoln, and the reason why was explained in a brilliant lecture by David Potter of Yale:

"'He, Lincoln, became the object of fabulous tales as had hardly been told since the days of the monastic chroniclers. . . . In epic terms such as Homer might have used, this legend stressed his great physical strength, coupled with the tenderest compassion of the weak, his breeding wisdom, his infinite patience and humility. . . . Hence emerged a figure born in a log-cabin as lowly as any manger, growing up to bear the sorrows of the race and to suffer for all humanity. At last, on Good Friday, 1865, his life on earth was sacrificed for the redemption of the Union, and on Easter Sunday the people met in churches throughout the land to mourn the Savior of the States.'

"'Whither came this legend? It had, of course, many sources; and among them is *Lincoln and Men of War-Times*. When in *A Shelf of Lincoln Books* (1946), Paul M. Angle selected the books basic to understanding Lincoln and his age, McClure's volume was included. Mr. Angle called it—and properly so— 'an uncommonly instructive book,' adding: 'His appraisal of Cameron, for example, is much more convincing than the all black characterization that passes current; his analysis of Lincoln as a politician is unsurpassed. . . . Bias, certainly, McClure possessed; but within this understandable limit he was truly a superb reporter.'"

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